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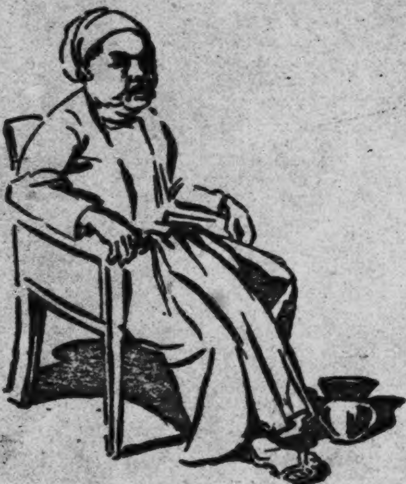
chair, with a betel box and spittoon on one side of him, and his favourite and most learned grandchild, my cousin Lu Pe now Superintendent of Archæology, reading the scriptures to him, he could sit in the shadow of his solid teak house, with a row of mango trees before him, the townspeople using his well of clean good water, the road through his garden which was open at the hottest hours of the day for all wayfarers and sellers to find a short and shady route across, his garden with flowers for altar and vegetables for kitchen, and stray trees which are an asset in any garden—the *gwe* tree whose fruits were sweeter and larger than the ordinary, the *dandalun* with pods to curry and leaves for soup, the *ywetyo* with its leprous looking fruit which are for the connoisseur and to be eaten as cure for coughs. How blessed for my grandfather at the end of his days to have attained such peaceful comfort and to feel that he had passed on religion, literature, discipline of mind and body to the generation of his grandchildren.



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To dwell in a pleasant spot, to have done good deeds in former births,
To have set oneself in the right path,—this is the greatest blessing.
Much learning and much science, and a discipline well learned,
Yea, and a pleasant utterance,—this is the greatest blessing.
(From the *Mingala-thot-pyo* : Song of Blessing.)

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• 539

Or of far-off Meiktila Lake where the water stretches seven miles ong:

Meiktila kan-daw auk ka	From the waters of Meiktila Lake
Hpa kauk hkè ba	Pick up a frog for me.
Hpa pa yin ta gaung pay ba	Poor little frog,
Myet lon ga kyaung taung taung hnin,	Eyes big agog,
Hpa gaung ga thay.	And body so thin and wee.

Or the jumping nonsensical rhyme about Gyat-Aye who got beaten by her mother and wept in a dark corner and started a train of kaleidoscopic events, for every time a line ended with a clanging rhythm it suggested a rhyming word to shout out and continue its own associations, and when you got back to a rhyme for Gyat-Aye, you had to start all over again, and poor Gyat-Aye got beaten and cried as long as children's voices held out.

Gyat-Aye	Gyat-Aye
Thu amay yaik lo	Beat by her mother so,
Hmaung maik hma ngo	Cries in dark corner "Oh",
Ko Lu Byo	Young bachelor Ko
Hta-yan pauk ka	Through hole in the mantel
Chay-dauk ko swè,	Pulls at her ankle
Twè-lè !	Dangle !
Twè-le yè	Dangling yet wait awhile,
Nay ba ohn	The rain clouds pile,
Mo tway ka chon	The heavens clang,
Mok lon !	Meringue !
Mok lon yè sekku kat pa lo	Meringue with paper stuck below
Kya ka-lat hnin hsun-daw tin	Offer at altar in lacquer bowl,
Pa-lin paw ka myauk kalay,	From throne seat the monkey gay
Hsin chi lo pyay	Runs down and off with it away !
Gyat-Aye !	Gyat-Aye !

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Before going to bed, A-Kyi or Ngwe Yin took us in to say our prayers in chorus. We then *shikkoed* our parents, that is, made obeisance to them by folding hands and bowing till our foreheads and outstretched palms touched the ground, first to my father, then to my mother, and they said in turn each night: "*Pongyi-ba-say, thetshay-ba-say meba hnin-o-aung-min-aung paung-ya-ba-say :* May your holiness be great and your life long, may you be united with your parents even until the attainment of old age."

elections, pagoda festivals, the football match which has just been won, 545
or an Indian film which is being advertised, and on mispronunciations of 522
English words to give them a bawdy meaning. In fact, they were amusing in the way of good music hall gags, but in an anyein the clowns needed more native wit and quickness, for not only did they extemporize by quips at the audience, exercising their fancy at a dog that howled or a foreigner sitting in the back rows, but the audience itself was free to join in and challenge their sharpness.

The songs sung, however, were not vulgar songs; they were pretty or 545
serious and were mostly written specially in honour of the occasion. No matter what the reason for the staging of the anyein, the song-writers did not find accurate description an impediment to their poetic fancy, fitting details of the time, place and sponsors to rhyme and rhythm. When an Anglo-Burman student and I won State scholarships in 1937, Inya 539
Hall, the residential hall for women, held an anyein, and the song of the evening had a refrain which repeated: *"Mi Mi yè, Kathleen yè, Ahkya bwè:* Oh Mi Mi, Oh Kathleen, how much to be admired and emulated!" Unfortunately, by the time I returned home the tune had been fitted to more popular words and I never learnt the original version, but I do remember the song written as an accompaniment for the dance of Ma Ohn, a talented student from Mandalay, who took part as representative performer of the University in an entertainment given for the funds of the National Girls' School. The words show the characteristic happy mixture of song and description:

Yatanadon Man Shwe Myo thu,
Thabaw kaung hnin say-da-na hpyu
Varsity nan myi yu
Kyaung-gyi colleik thu.
A-hok ko bin thabaw tu,
Ta-gè ko bin manaw hpyu
Myoma kyaung a-hlu
Waing wun ka-pa-ku.
Yandan ngway ko say-da-na hla ya
Way-bya myat kyi hpyu
Amyo thami Boddha ba-tha
Taing ee ee sa hpyu
Aung lan ta lu lu
Nameik kaung thabaw hmat yu,
Myoma kyaung a twet—hsaung ywet lo ku
hsaung ywet lo ku
Pyo pya Ohn ko Shwe Daing Nyun ga thachin yay pay ti the.

539 Dweller of Mandalay, City of Jewels,
With a generous heart
To come and take part
As student of our greatest schools.
Indeed so willing
So glad to be filling
Our need for the cause of the National School.
With mind so kind towards the fund
For Buddhist girls, our country's dower,
As this succeeds our plans shall flower.
She comes to dance for the National School,
She comes to dance,
She comes to dance,
Young lady Ohn, sweet, single, pretty,
For whom Shwe Daing Nyun has written this ditty.

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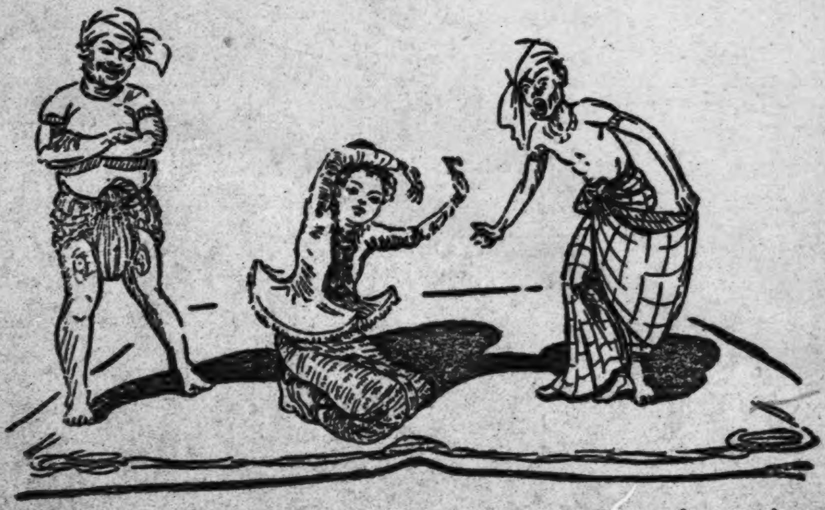
522 We laughed loud and long at the jokes of our most popular pair of clowns—a thin shrivelled man called Hnyat-Gyi ("great nut-cracker")



and a big well-fed man called Dambouk ("pillau rice")—on the occasions when we could hear them, but during the intervals our daily companions at the University did not allow us to miss them very much. The average Burman spends much time and thought, comparatively speaking, on making puns and spoonerisms, fashioning riddles and conceits to spice or flower his normal speech, and both the native wit and the monosyllabic language ensure a roaring success. It was the commonest thing to pass a crowd of students sitting or standing around having a

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Kachin) AP1
Burmese AP4

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customer has gone his way. It used to be a common thing in the palace, during the late king's reign, to let loose a number of birds for the delectation of foreign worshippers at the golden feet, and the expansion of the royal merit. Ill-natured people said all the birds were recaptured in the next room, and appeared again for the next display of charity; but of that I can say nothing.

Be
342
351

Each house, with its ground, is surrounded by a rude fence more or less substantial according to the character of the district. Where there are many tigers or ill-doers, and especially north of Mandalay, where formerly the Kachins might swoop down any night, this is made very high and strong, and is further rendered effective by a formidable array of sharpened bamboos. Except where the British have taken the matter in hand, the village roads are simply places where the jungle is kept from growing. There is no attempt at metalling; in fact there is no material for the purpose. In some pretentious villages indeed there is a raised path formed of bricks set on edge, and about three feet broad. This is regarded as a public work of great value, and a distinction to the inhabitants of the place. It usually leads to the monastery. In many villages, however, it would be impossible to move about during the rains without some such contrivance. The mud would be too deep, and logs are slippery even to bare feet.

Ba
[563]

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Swinging by a couple of ropes from the roof hangs in the centre of the house a rude basket, made snug with a blanket or some old clothes. This is the baby's cradle, and the mother may often be seen sitting by it crooning and gently swaying it backwards and forwards. Some of the lullabies are very clever. I have tried to give a version of one of the most popular, with as near an approach to the metre as practicable. It is sung to the favourite te-dat air.

Be
539

SEIN-NI LA-YAUNG

Clouds in Heaven,
Bright as levin,
Dyed with rosy diamond's light,
Did the Nine Gems
Stud your white hems,

Silver moonbeams
Cast their chill gleams,
But to make black darkness vanish,
Sweet sleep from my babe's eyes banish?
Fairies wiled him,
Dreams beguiled him,
In his cradle wrapped so snugly,
Cradle carved with nayas[1] ugly,
Carved with Nats and Kings and Princes,
Every splendour that evinces
Royal state and princely usance.
There he slept, when what a nuisance!
Comes the light
To affright
And scare him back to home from elfin land.

Sweet, my babe, your father's coming,
Rest and hear the songs I'm humming;
He will come and gently tend you,
Rock your cot and safe defend you;
Mother's setting out his dinner—
Oh, you naughty little sinner!
What a yell from such a wee thing,
Couldn't be worse if you were teething.
My sweet round mass of gold,
Now please do what you're told.
Be quiet and good,
As nice boys should.
Oh, you plaguy, nasty brat!
I must call the great big cat,
He will come and squeeze and bite,
Scratch and eat you up outright.
Puss, puss, puss, you great big pussy!
Here's a boy so nice and juicy,
Let the mice have one night's pleasure,
You shall eat him at your leisure.

Nasty, naughty, noisy baby,
If the cat won't, Nats will maybe
Come and pinch and punch and rend you.
If they do I won't defend you.
Oh, now please,
Do not tease.
Do be good,
As babies should,
Just one tiny little while;
Try to sleep, or try to smile.

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[1] A naya is a dragon with four legs. The word used here, myat è yin-wè, is specially reserved for royal cradles. The plebeian article is called pa-hket. Throughout, the language is of the most honorific character.

My prince, my sweet gold blood, my son,
Ordained a regal race to run,
Listen to your mother's coaxing,
Listen to the song good folks sing.
When little boys
Make such a noise,
Comes the brownie
On wings downy,
Comes the wood sprite
In the dark night,
Witch and warlock,
Mere and tor-folk,
Kelpie, nikker,
Quick and quicker,
Gobble all bad babies up.

Mercy, what an awful squall!
Don't you love mamma ~~at all~~?
Where's your father? Fie, for shame!
He could quiet you if he came.
But he won't; he lolls and smokes,
With the neighbours cracks his jokes.
He's just as bad as you, tā-te,[1]
Plagues poor mamma and stays away.
Now I tell you
This to quell you,
Both shall rue it.
Thus I'll do it,
Neither shall have any dinner;
You no sweet milk,
He no meat ilk,
You'll be good when you are thinner.

The King alone you dread on earth,
The wise man said it at your birth,
Said that all the stars would love you,
None on earth should be above you;
But I'm sure that in the palace
Princes never shriek for malice.
Now I'll sing the eighty ditties,[2]
Known in all the royal cities,
Lullabies so soft and drowsy
E'en the Nat-so could not rouse ye.
Hush, my babe, my prince, my treasure,
List the poppy's slumbrous measure.

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[1] Tā-te, according to the consent of the Burmese nursery literature, is the typical bad boy.

[2] "The eighty ditties," a very old and well-known palace lullaby.

346 171 172 missionaries from Central India who introduced the teachings of the Lord Buddha into Burma. There was certainly an ancient Hindu colony there, and its inhabitants may have brought some notions of their architecture with them. But whether this be so or not, Burmans find source for pride in the admitted fact that "there is nothing in India to compare with the classical beauty of some of the smaller temples, or the stupendous architectural majesty of the Ánanda, or the Ta-pyi-nyu."

778 788 538 The following song is taken from a very favourite play, *Sawpé Sawmé*, written by a Pegu dramatist and published in 1880, and gives an idea of the canticles sung at the dedication of pagodas and similar ceremonies. It is set to a very popular air, the Yôddaya Nan-thein Than, "the Siamese Palace Tune," but I have not ventured to try to reproduce the original complicated metre. The sikkè or magistrate in question was U Maung Galé, a younger brother of the late U On, long the only Burmese C.I.E., and once second judge of the Small Cause Court in Rangoon.

539 THE GILDING OF THE SHWE MAW-DAW

Far-famed and bright, the Shwe Maw-daw
Is known where'er the Sacred Law
To toiling millions brings the peace,
Bids grief be still and turmoil cease.
Fair glory of Peguan land
Revered on earth's most distant strand,
Not more Dagôn's great golden pile
Hath honour in the Southern Isle,
Where'er beneath the zampu tree
The pious bend the suppliant knee,
Than thou the glorious lotus shrine
High temple of the hairs divine.
As leaps on high the funeral flame
Of some yahan of sainted name,
A beacon light to Neikban's rest
And haven sure to men distressed,
So skywards reared, thy shapely spire
Upsprings a pyramid of fire.

The hoar seer's words are now proved true,
Spoke ages since while yet all new

539

The callow world in earnest youth
Revered the Buddha's law of truth,
Ere yet the wiles of lust and wrath
Beguiled men from the Noble Path,
And ignorance of sins, the worst
With which the race of man is cursed:
When white men reign
Thy glories wane,
Yet blaze again
While yet they reign.

High honour to our Sikkè Min,
Who purged away the stain of sin.
Now radiant as a mass of gold,
The temple glitters as of old;
Ten thousand districts chant his name,
The Sekya systems vaunt his fame,
High winner of the holy rest.
Thrice is the benefactor blessed.
For him the last of lives is run
The ferry past and Ne'ban won.
Great guerdon gains such gift as this,
A sainted name, eternal bliss,
On earth renown will live for aye,
Beyond ne'er more to breathe a sigh.
Whenas the sacred work was wrought
The Tha-gya Min came down unsought,
Sweet music breathed from angel bands
And Déwas sped the workers' hands,
A nimbus shone around the spire
And gleamed each gem with holy fire,
As though on high in lucent coil
The sacred hair did grace the toil,
And once again in hermit guise
The Buddha Prince blessed the emprise.

Hast seen the lotus-bud in prayer
Fold fervent leaves; with odours rare
Invoke the Buddha's gracious power
To save mankind in danger's hour?
Hast seen the pôngyi's garb of peace,
The golden robe, strong to release
The suppliant from endless strife,
Unceasing change, the pains of life?
So prayerful stands the holy fane,
So new-born gleams in golden grain;
And calmly sleep the hairs divine,
Meet relic for so fair a shrine;
And hither on the holy day
From far and near men wend their way

● 539

And kneeling pray that they may gain
Release from fitful change and pain.
Ah, Saviour Buddha, hear them call
And grant the long, last life to all.

High striving to the upper air,
Great convent of the Sacred Hair,
Thou'st stood upon the foreland's brow
From misty ages e'en till now.
The Budh himself, with his own mouth,
Stood on this hill, and, looking south,
Foretold that on this spot should stand
A fane far-famed in farthest land;
And hither came the brethren twain
And reared with stone of precious vein
A lordly pile and gilt it o'er
And many a monarch added store,
Till last of all our Sikkè came
And joined to theirs a pious name.
From youngest years till hoarest hours,
Peguans all, great fame is ours;
Two Henthas dwelt here, male and mate,
Ten thousand kings kept regal state,
And ever till the kalpas end
Will pious pilgrims hither wend.
Ah, Sikkè, great reward is thine,
Thy fame doth last while lasts the shrine
And ere the shrine falls, falls the world.

778
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Pegu was the capital of the Talaing kingdom of Hanthawadi. Shin Gautama foretold that it would be founded in the 1116th year of his religion, and gave two of his hairs to two brothers, Mahā Thala and Sula Thala, to enshrine on the Thudathana Myinthila Hill. A pagoda fifty cubits high was erected over them, and this was the original of the Shwe Maw (or Hmaw) -daw Payā.

The model to be followed would be worthless did the face 778
express the hopes and fears and pleasures of wretched 532
mortality.

The following triumphal song is taken from the same 778
play of Sawpé Sawmé as the chant in celebration of the 796
gilding of the Pegu pagoda, and is set to the same Yoddaya nan-thein than. The Mahā Myat Muni is the "Arakan Pagoda" in Mandalay.

ON THE IMAGE PRESENTED BY THE PEGU INSPECTOR TO THE MAHĀ MYAT-MUNI 539 ●

Fair springs the sun at dawning
From out the forest's green,
The nine gems on his nat-front
Shine gloriously at e'en.

The rainbow weaves nat-raiment,
Sweet is the lily's breath,
The malla flower is winsome,
That weeps the Saddan's[1] death.

But fairer is the image
That Hanthawadi sends,
Amid its gold and silver
The pearl with ruby blends.

The maiden from her finger
Drew off her jewelled rings,
The men brought costly diamonds
And wealth of precious things,

And as 'mid shouts and clangour
The flames leapt red as gold
All joyous cast their treasures
Into the hissing mould.

So high hath Buddha honour
In Hanthawadi's soil,
So gladly seek believers
Release from earthly toil.

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[1] The Saddan is the White Elephant, the last incarnation of Shin Gautama before he was conceived in Queen Maia's womb.

First great Sandathuriya[1]
The Master's features wrought,
He sought the Budh's permisson,
Nor failed in what he sought.

And I, the poor Inspector,
Fired by as holy zeal,
Present a copied image
And trust for equal weal.

That 'tis a precious alms-gift
Great prodigies attest,
The Buddha's six-fold glory
Gleams nightly on its crest,

And whenas it was casting
Byammās and nats untold
Came down and cast rich offerings
Into the holy mould.

Yea, myriads of all creatures
From every earthly seat
Rejoicing cast their alms-gifts
Before the Buddha's feet.

With close-clasped hands men bowed them,
With fervent minds they prayed,
That Buddha some great token
Might grant them for their aid.

Then from the lordly image,
Aglow with brilliant light,
There streamed both fire and water
Upon their dazzled sight,

And diamond rays and ruby,
The Six great Glories blaze,
The Buddha's Nine great Splendours
Blind their adoring gaze.

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[1] The King Sandathuriya, while the Buddha was yet alive, obtained his permission to make a statue of him. This image is the great twelve-foot high brass Tinmyinkwe, now the chief centre of worship in the Mahā Myat-muni shrine.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

There's many a goodly image
 In Mahā Myat-muni,
But Mamyay[1] shall be aged
 Ere it a fairer see. 539 ●

And I, the poor Inspector,
 May lay me down in peace,
For when this life is ended
 Existences shall cease.

It is a very usual practice at the casting of bells and images for the onlookers to throw gold and silver articles of jewellery into the ladles of melted ore. 778 325

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[1] Mamyay is a common poetical contraction for Mandalay. Man is also frequently used. [103]

and pertinacity with which they defied the mosquitoes under 533
the shade of the trees, and droned away on their pipes all
through a tight-tunicked and perspiring Rangoon afternoon
garden party, as the observant Burman imagined, at one
endless tune. The national music is not written down, and
each actor has a variation of his own, but the smallest girl
in the audience would detect a kayāthan from a dobatthan
with as much readiness as any English boy would distinguish
"Drops o' Brandy" from the "Old Hundred"!
But there are some people who do not like the Italian opera,
and even say so.

The following short outline of the *Zawtagômma pyazat* 536
will give an idea of the style of the more popular drama, as 539 ●
distinguished from the purely religious birth-story. The
writer was an old player himself. He lived at Pegu, and the
Zawtagômma was perhaps his most successful effort. The
text has been published at one of the vernacular presses in
Rangoon, and the sketch given is a translation of the Zatlan,
the "path of the play," prefixed by the editor. "In the
country of Pyinyawwada, of which Yazôtta was the sovereign,
the name of the Southern Queen was Thunemadewi, and
that of the Northern Queen Thukethidewi. The Queen of
the Southern Palace was about to bear a child, and the
king issued an order that her majesty of the North should
attend on her. This was very irritating to the Northern
Queen, and she resolved to ruin Thunemadewi, and for that
purpose conspired with Shin Gwe Ni, the midwife. As soon
as the child was born it was to be killed, and set afloat on
the river in an earthen pot, and the *accoucheuse* was to say
the Head Queen had been delivered of a still-born baby.
A twin son and daughter were born, and Shin Gwe Ni put
each of them in a jar and launched them on the river, and
went and told the king that they were still-born. Yazôtta,
the king, was very angry, and punished his consort by setting
her to dig the ground and carry water for the palace. The [643]
Queen of the North was promoted to be Head Queen, and [582]
her daughter, Pyinsarupa, was made tabin-daing (*i.e.* she
was set apart as wife for the next king, and not allowed to
marry).

"With regard to the bodies of the prince and princess.

536 ●539 the prince was carried down the Yamuna river and the Thuwuna nagā swallowed the body, and the spirit of the prince entered into the ruby that hung in the necklace of the dragon. Not long after the nagā became nervous and uncomfortable in his mind, and proceeded to the monastery of the recluse Bedaseinda, in the Thiriwunna forest. There he went to keep the ten holy precepts. As soon as the ya-theit saw the necklace with the ruby in it, he knew by his bedin that the spirit of a young prince was enclosed there. He therefore represented to the dragon that it was unseemly to wear precious things when he was observing the injunctions of the law. The nagā therefore gave him the necklace in alms, and having kept the ten precepts the prescribed number of days, returned to his own place. When the prince was born anew from the ruby, the ya-theit gave him the name of Zawtagômma, and explained to him all that had happened in the prince's last existence.

"The princess's body was carried away into the Southern Ocean, and there the fish kegga-thitha, whose head is shaped like a sceptre, ate her up. The spirit of the princess entered a pearl in the fish's head and dwelt there. A violent hurricane came on, and the fish was carried up into the sky and fell down inside the enclosure of the recluse Bedaseinda. When the ya-theit cast eyes on the pearl, he knew that a princess was in it, and he gave this pearl, called the myissa, to the Zawtagômma prince. From the precious stone was born in seven days the princess, and she got the name of Palèthwè. The ya-theit knew from his mystic books that in the former existence they had been brother and sister, and told them all about it.

"When they grew up he told them they were to go back to the old king and queen's capital in the Pyinyawwada country, and on their way they were to make offerings and give the pearl to the Gyo nat. But the prince forgot all about the Meittu Gyo, and the spirit therefore became very angry with him. While they were travelling on, the nat separated them by means of magnets, which attracted the iron in their bones, and drew them away to the devils on either side, to right and to left, who held the magnets.

"Meanwhile, in the Pyinyawwada country, Zawtagômma's

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539●

father and mother, and his stepmother, the former Northern Queen, had all of them gone to the country of nat-déwas (*i.e.* died), and there was no king to rule over the land. The Pyinsarupa princess, therefore (who had been kept single to marry the new king), according to ancient custom, sent out the pôtthwin yattā (a chariot which has no driver, and stops where the horses will), and it hurried away from the palace and came and stopped beside the sleeping Zawtagômma. When he woke he entered the chariot, and the horses returned straight to the capital. The prince then ascended the throne and married Pyinsarupa.

"In the meantime, the princess who was born from the pearl came to the house of a pônna and his wife, and was delivered of a child there. One day she covered the baby with an emerald green neckerchief, and laid it on the bank of a lake while she went into the water to bathe. But a bird, called kemayekka, swooped down from the skies and carried off the green scarf, baby and all. Then it flew to the palace of Zawtagômma and circled round in the air above it. The prince shot at it with a bow, and it fell down and died, and vomited up the green scarf, and the baby, still alive. As soon as Zawtagômma saw the infant and the neckerchief, he knew that they were Palèthwè's, and clasping the child in his arms, he set out to find the princess, and wandered far and wide.

"Palèthwè herself, as soon as she had obtained permission from the pônna, set off in search of the prince and her child. The Brahmin priest, with the aid of his mantras, made her assume the appearance of a man, and despatched her to seek Zawtagômma in the disguise of a harp-player. He also instructed her that she would meet the prince on the way, but she was not to reveal herself to him: she was to explain how it was that the two had been separated by the Meittu Gyo nat, and say that she had met Palèthwè, and that the princess had gone to Pyinyawwada; Zawtagômma himself was to take the counsel of the Bedin wise men, and return to his own country, where he must offer sacrifices to the ten gyo nats, whereupon he would meet the princess Palèthwè, the wife he so tenderly loved. All these instructions the pônna gave to the princess, and then let

536 her go. Everything happened as he had foretold. She met
●539 the prince and he followed her advice. They returned to
the Pyinyawwada country, and all was happy."

536 The above is the merest outline of the story. The piece is very long, and there is abundance of incident. The prince's servant, and usually also the two holy men, do the comic part of the business, but this is always so purely personal a matter that the printed text can give no real notion of what actually is said. It serves merely to point out the lines which the lubyet must follow in his impersonation. The stage books, written on palm-leaf, contain but very few detailed speeches, and merely indicate the story, and throw out hints to the actors. The following is one of the songs sung by the prince in his wanderings through the
533 forest in quest of Palèthwè. It is written to the tune of the "Chase in the Tawmawyôn Forest," that in which the king
[775] goes to hunt in the epic of the Ramayana. The wut or wutdaw referred to is the penalty of suffering the same punishment, or death, which has in a former existence been wrongfully or needlessly inflicted on others. Thus the great minister, Widuya, spoken of, who was an avatar of the Lord Buddha, had in a previous life dragged a frog by the leg so that it died. Hence he is dragged at the tail of the fierce Nat's horse until he dies himself. The prince fears that some such evil destiny is working itself out on him. The jingle of the rhythm is intended. The whole play is of the "raging rocks and shivering shocks" pattern.

539

FATE

The wind breathes chill
Across the rill
That cuts the forest track;
The haze to mist
Whitens, I wist,
And I am lost, alack.

The branches spread
Dull green and red
Flat o'er the sullen stream;
Comes through the gloom
The gibbon's boom,
And shrill the parrot's scream.

Ah, sad the scene;
But yet, I ween,
A sadder wight am I;
The thuyaung seed[1]
Gives lovers rede,
But sears my tortured eye.

Ah, cruel spite,
Ah, cursed night,
That tore my Queen away;
More comfort here,
In jungle drear,
Than in the golden day.

The fog's death-cloud
Hangs like a shroud
Upon the shagg'd hillside;
The tall trees mope,
The wild beasts grope,
Nor know what may betide.

Yet the great sun
Needs cast but one
Fierce eye upon the gloom;
The mists all rise,
Mix with the skies,
And rainbows deck his loom.

Ah, wretched wight,
Such omen bright
Gleams not upon my fate;
Nor faint, nor bright,
Hope's golden light
Lends me no heart to wait.

The story old
Of Nat so bold
Creeps o'er my harassed thought;
Haply this hill
He treadeth still,
And here that horror wrought.

In warlike guise,
With wings on thighs,
He scales where eagles flag;

---

[1] The fruit of the thuyaung bin, a kind of half shrub, half tree, has a curious semblance to the figure of a woman, and *soupirants* are wont to detect fancied enesses to the object of their affections, and deduce favourable omens from the covery.

His magic steed
Hath such great speed
The lightnings seem to lag.

Ah, fateful law,
Ruthless Wutdaw,
Widuya, art thou feared?
From life long past,
Thy sin at last
Eftsoons must dree its weird.

Nor soon, nor late
With calm, cold gait
The Wut relentless tracks;
Nor prayer, nor fees
Will bring release,
'Tis blood for blood it lacks.

Thy limbs fast tied
The Nat doth ride
O'er gorge and cliff and plain;
At his horse heels
Dragged, no faint steals
O'er thee to spare one pain.

Though blood forth gushed
And brain was crushed,
Thy heart was panting still;
Lingered thy breath,
Nor came glad death
Till ye twain reached this hill.

The fiend sprang down,
And from its crown
He hurled thee many a rod,
With eldritch glee
He hurled e'en thee
The great embryo god.

So the old Wut
With stealthy foot
Nor pity e'er evinces:
So must some crime
From ancient time
Have robbed me of my princess.

Methinks 'twas here,
This place so drear,
That great Widuya died;

1

539

Here or elsewhere,
With praise and prayer
I seek him for my guide.

Ah, still the Wut
Its baleful fruit
Doth bring before mine eyes.
See, bright and clear,
The Saddan mere
And round the mountains rise.

Like jangled chime,
Or tangled rhyme,
The piteous tale is told;
The Saddan Min[1]
By death solves sin
Committed once of old.

Thrice wretched she,
By destiny
Marked out the blow to guide;
She, then as Queen
Thubadda seen
Had erewhile been his bride.

But beauty's curse
Hath made her nurse
Greed most akin to hate;
The milk-white tusk
She sought to busk
With glories six her state.

Then her behest
She hath addressed
To Thawnôtto, the hind;
Fell hunter that,
As Dewadat
Hath felon deeds designed.

---

[1] The Saddan Min is the Celestial White Elephant, an avatar of the Buddha Gautama. Hence it is that white elephants are so revered and regarded as the symbol of universal sovereignty. Thubadda had been the Saddan's queen in a previous existence. She repents, dies of sorrow, when she hears of the Lord White Elephant's end, and afterwards, in consequence, becomes a Yahanda in the time of the revealing of the Buddha. Mèbadda is the actual consort of the Saddan. She became, in after existence, Yathawdaya, the wife of Prince Theidat, before he left the palace and devoted himself to acquiring the Supreme Wisdom. Thawnôtto, the hunter, became the wicked Dewadat, cousin and brother-in-law of the Lord Buddha, and now languishes in Awidzi, suffering punishment for his attempt on the life of Shin Gautama.

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Then he with guile
His purpose vile
With yellow robe conceals ;
The Monkish garb
Hides the sharp barb,
Nor aught of sin reveals.

And when he nears
The silver mere's
Fair jewel-studded edge ;
Then like a snake,
Through baleful brake,
He parts the golden sedge.

His arrows' tip
With poison drip,
He rears his cobra head ;
The bowstring twanged,
The dart deep-fanged
Its course too well had sped.

Thy heart is cleft,
Thy life is reft,
Now, reel'st thou, milk-white King ;
The woodland hushed,
And darkness brushed
O'er earth its sooty wing.

The silent moon
Doth fright the noon,
And Death e'en breath restrains ;
Save one wild scream
Might check the stream
Of blood in murder's veins.

Mèbadda, Queen,
The deed had seen,
She caught him e'er he fell ;
Would staunch the flood
Of red heart's blood
That fiercely forth doth well.

Ah me, 'tis vain,
Wild with heart-pain
Forth flies the frenzied wife
To seek for foes,
Or mayhap those
Might save the Saddan's life.

Ye who doubt truth,
The boundless ruth
Of the all-pitying Budh ;

539

Now list ye well
What then befell,
And quit your scoffing mood.

Straight to the cave,
Where crouched the knave,
He walks with gentle mien;
Himself bestows
The tusks' white snows
For Thubadda, the Queen.

Ah, cruel Wut,
Why strayed my foot
Unto this hateful spot?
See low I bow
To earth my brow;
Be mine less awesome lot.

Here erewhile trod
The embryo god,
Now all is dull and blear;
O'er land and sea
I seek for thee,
My Princess, even here.

By lonesome lake,
Through forest brake,
I'll track each rumour's breath;
Where roams the bear,
By fierce beast's lair,
I'll seek thee e'en past death.

But, 'gainst the Wut's
Fierce power what boots
To strive with eager zeal?

. . . . .

Peace, doubting heart,
No fate can part
True lovers fond and leal.

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As an illustration of a purely religious play may be given the *Nemi Zat*, one of the Ten Great Birth Stories. It is occasionally represented as a yôkthe, or marionette play, but it is rather expensive to put it on the stage well. It was "preached" in the monastery of Meggadawun, during the stay of Shin Gautama in Mèthila, of which country he remembered to have been king in a previous existence. The following is the story in brief:—

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In old times the King Mingadeva ruled over the country, and for many years was entirely given up to pleasure and worldly passions, till one day his barber showed him a grey hair—"a flag of the king of death," as it is commonly called in Burmese—which he had found on the royal head. The king was struck with this *memento mori*, and immediately saw yawning before his eyes the abyss of mortality. The vision scared him, and he gave up the gay raiment and idle pleasures of earthly glory and wandered into the desert to end his life as a hermit. His self-denying piety gained for him on his death elevation to the seats of the Byammās, and all the 82,000 princes who succeeded him on the throne of Mèthila followed the example of their ancestor and retired into hermits' cells when they felt their end approaching. Mingadeva, from his blissful superior seat, followed with earnest solicitude the fortunes of his dynasty, and when at length he saw that it was drawing near its close, he returned once more to earth. He was conceived in the womb of the then Queen of Mèthila, and was born of her, and received the name of Prince Nemi. From his earliest years, as the pônnas discerned from his horoscope, his mind was firmly and unwaveringly directed to the prescriptions of religion and to pious observances. Once when he felt a doubt in his mind as to whether the outward giving of alms or inward self-contemplation was the more meritorious, the Tha-gyā King himself came down and instructed him that abundant charity would indeed secure him a new birth in the heavens of Nat-déwas, but that only the cultivation of the mind could ensure a rise to the blessed regions of the Byammās. The Déwa King was so attracted by the religious spirit and piety of the young prince that on his return he spoke of it with admiring delight to his subject Nats. Their curiosity was excited by the account of such distinguished qualities in a man, and they begged the Tha-gyā Min to procure for them the acquaintance of so holy a personage. Accordingly the king gave orders to a young Déwa named Matali to descend to the earth and invite the young prince to a visit to the nat-heavens.

It was the day of the full moon, and all the inhabitants of Mèthila were assembled in the streets and on the pagoda

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platforms to observe the ceremonies of the holy day, when a great wonder happened. While the full moon shone high and clear in the heavens, there appeared through the clouds a glowing light in the east, so that all the people cried aloud in astonishment that two moons had arisen in the sky at the same time. But as the light gradually neared and neared, it became evident that it was a nat-chariot with the young Déwa inside. Matali advanced to the prince and invited him to enter the car and proceed to the realms of the blessed. Nemi stepped in without fear, and when he was told by the charioteer that there were two ways open to him, of which one led through the horrors of Nga-yè, and the other through the Elysian fields, he at once desired to visit both. First they went down to the eight vast burning chambers, and saw the pains of the damned in the fiery gloom of hell, and then they ascended and viewed the pure delights of bright paradise. After Nemi had met in audience the highest king of Nats, he returned to earth to give to his subjects a true account of what fate would befall them after death, according as they followed the path of virtue or of vice.

After many peaceful and honoured years, when Nemi at last saw his hair begin to grow grey, he, like his predecessors, entered the state of Yahanda and abdicated the royal power. The same venerable custom was followed by his son Thalarazana, the last of the roll of kings, who, when old age began to snow upon them, devoted themselves to the holy order in the town of Yathemyo (Kappilavastu).

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It is evident that such a play as this, though it offers plenty of incident, is for this very reason the more difficult to put on the stage, and can hardly be satisfactorily produced at all except as a marionette play. No zāt furnishes more subjects to the Burman artist than that of Nemi, and pagoda corridors all over the country are decorated with the scenes in hell, which are much more easily pictured to the mind and the eye than the pure joys of heaven.

● 539

RANGOON MAIDENS

O, the girls of Rangoon town,
They are fairies who've come down
From seats of nats, beyond the skies, sure here their likes are none,
And the fragrance on their cheek,
Gad, it makes a man feel weak,
And their hair so black and glossy with jet wavelets in the sun.
Ye maidens fair,
With graces rare,
Your faces and your ways they are a pair;
Nat-maidens are renowned,
But to say this I am bound—
If you were mixed
We should be fixed,
For who could tell the fairy from the fair?
You're so slender
And so tender,
You are like Wethandaya's queen,
And when Barani is seen,
Who goddess is of flowers on the green,
Men say,
'Amè!
Such a likeness, I am sure, ne'er was seen.'
Ah, when we meet by chance,
My heart's all in a dance,
You're so dangerously, murderously fair.
The diamond ear-ring's light
Like a meteor glows at night,
With the lightning of the hair-pin in the midnight gloom of hair.

The Southern Queen,
The right-hand Queen,
She who sits supreme, alone
By the monarch on the throne,
She the greatest of the Four;
List, sweet maids whom I adore,
Dark-skinned or fair,
Slim, *débonnaire*,
She has robes, a kingdom's joy,
That two hundred looms employ;
But the silken flowers you wear,
You may dare with her compare,
Rangoon maids.
With gay kerchief o'er the bosom,
With sweet swaying of the shoulder,
Without art
Ye inflict on one or two some
Wounds that love will hardly solder
In the heart.

O that curve in the round arm! 539
It has wrought men grievous harm.
Like the sylphs when they're at play,
Like the maids of Mandalay,
Without display
In everyday
Quiet dresses they
Are busked and gay
As the daughters of the palace, as the maidens of the skies
In their natural, their usual array.

O! could I but sing what I think,
My heart would no more on the brink
Of despairing love struggle and sink,
Ye maidens to heavens the link;
Each passer-by
Who casts his eye
Upon the buxom Hanthawaddy girls,
Though he be sage,
His feelings wage
Fierce war within his brain-pan till it whirls.

Dewa daughters, fair, fair,
Rosebud fairies, ware, ware,
Born men's hearts to snare, spare,
Can I paint your ways,
Better sound your praise,
In verse
That's terse
Than thus: You're fair as any maid in Mandalay.

Barani is a daughter of nats, corresponding very much to the classical Flora. [832]

Madi, the spouse of Prince Wethandaya, is always regarded as the model wife. [593]

Amè! "mother!" is the invariable exclamation of all Burmans on all possible occasions of astonishment, anger, doubt, or delight. [201]

The name Hanthawaddy, properly applied to the whole province, is, in songs, usually employed to designate Rangoon, for rhythmical more than any other reason, just as Mamye, or Mye, or Man stands for Mandalay. [195]

"Rosebud fairies," called bôngyo, are daughters of nats, 539
ho having stayed in the country of the déwas for a thousand 773
ars, are obliged to come down to the seat of man again.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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They are born from roses. Such charming houris apparently particularly affect Rangoon.

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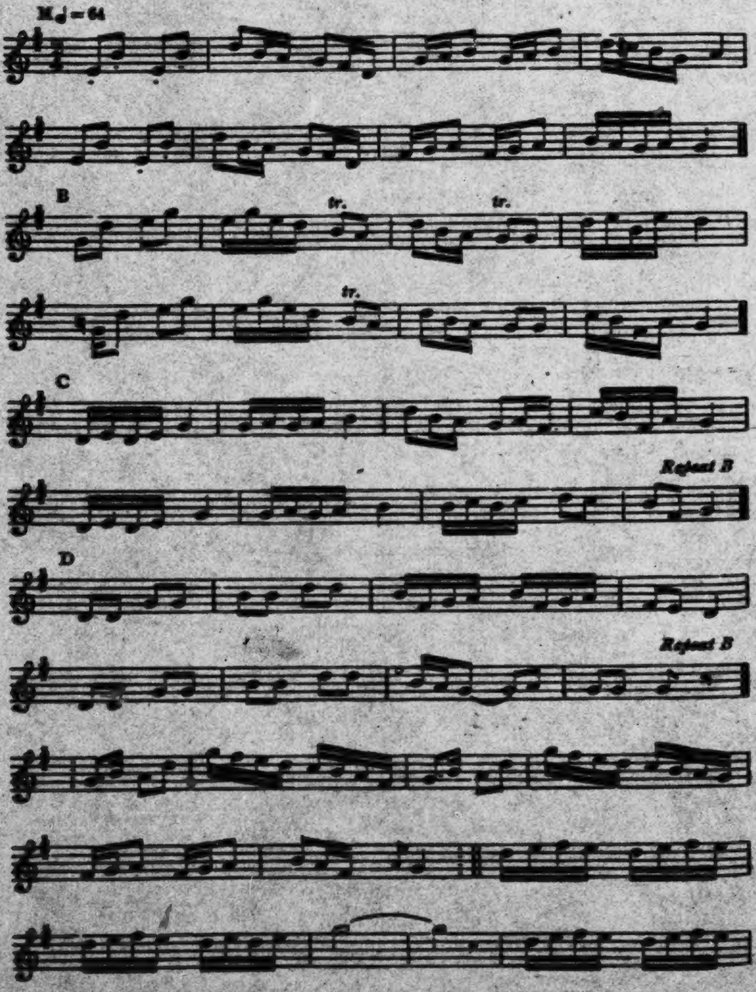
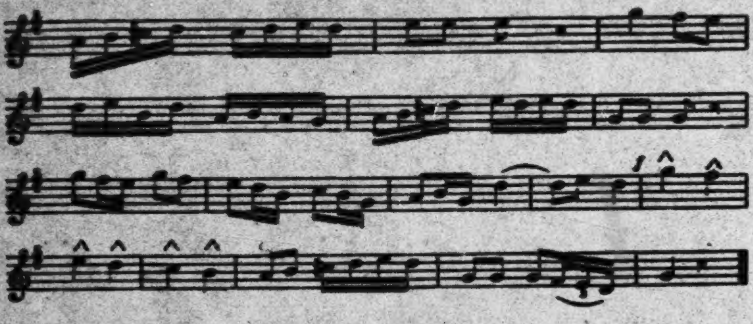
The following is the score as written down by Mr. St. Clair, now and for many years, editor of the *Singapore Free Press*:—

KAYA-THAN





539

Next to the "Sound of the Trumpet" the Dobatthan is probably the most popular air, and is certainly the next most familiar to the English ear. It may be called the refrain-song, and is remarkable for the long dwelling and trilling on the last note of each stanza. The do is the seed with which aim is taken in the game of gônnyinhto, and pat, or bat, is to twist or spin. The metre here is not so complicated :— 533

539

SERENADE

Love united,
Troth so fondly plighted,
Love's light with life first lighted.
Sigh, my dear,
In me here,
Long with fear,
Now thou'rt near;
Long and sigh, my dear.

Flew the storm-cloud,
Rose and shrieked the winds loud
Came I yet and lowly bowed.
Cold as lead
Here I sped,
For love dead
Bent my head,
Lonesome for love dead.

The thein-nats play,
See through wild rain I stray,
Drenched, but sad from thee away:
Sad and lone.
Sweet, my own,
Be not stone,
Hear me moan,
Sweet love, hear my moan.

539 Love, the cloud-rack,
Flashed blue gleams of hope back,
Broke and furled its fringes black;
Here I wait
At thy gate;
Open straight,
Be not late,
Hot with hope I wait.

My pet is fair
With flowers twined in her hair,
Kerchief gold-meshed like a snare,
Like a net
Fairly set
Hearts to get,
Sweet my pet,
Mine lies in that net.

Courtly story
Tells of queenly glory:
My queen's as fair and more, aye.
Eyebrow tint,
Just a glint,
Slightest hint
Of art in 't,
Eyebrow's pencilled tint.

Painted cheeks sweet,
Nosegay where all scents meet,
See, I throw me at thy feet.
There is none
To be won,
No not one
'Neath the sun,
Like my love there's none.

773 789 The thein-nats are certain spirits, or superior beings, who preside over the showers. It rains whenever they come out of their houses (the stars), to sport about and have mimic fights in the air. The thunder and the lightning are the clashing and shining of the celestial arms. When the sun is in the house of the goat it is very hot, and the thein-nats do not come out. To arouse them from their lethargy, if the rains are long of coming, it is a common custom in country places to have a lônswéthi, a tug-of-war. A chain or a stout cable is got, and the villagers divide themselves into two parties, and pull and shout and get up as much excite-

ment as possible, to stimulate the thein-nats to exert themselves also. A lônswèthi sometimes continues for nearly an hour without definite result. 773 789

The "painted cheeks," or "fragrant cheeks," so frequently mentioned in all these love-songs, refers to the thana'kha, a sweet-scented, straw-coloured powder made from the bark and roots of the *Murraya paniculata*, a flowering shrub of the citron species. Some girls, and especially some actresses, have particular recipes for making up the cosmetic into a moist paste. It is applied with the finger, and a good deal of skill is exhibited in putting on the requisite amount. Unpractised hands usually smear on far too much, and it is as unsightly as a badly whitewashed outhouse. On others it is barely visible. All girls use it, and not a few town dandies. 303

The following may be regarded as somewhat of an approach to the European *vers de société*. I have not attempted to imitate the original metre:— 533

THE CIGAR-MAIDEN OF MADEYA, NEAR MANDALAY 539 ●

Thy cheroots, so deftly fingered,
Famous are in Burma's land,
Many a chief has fondly lingered,
Watched the maiden's nimble hand.

Madeya, I'd spare to sing thee
For cheroots and dainty maids,
For their crispness doth but bring thee
Sorrow from the palace blades.

By the throne's great gilded grandeur
Sits the prince, cheroot in hand,
And behind him little Ma Nyo,
Pearl of all the village band.

Burnt up all my love and sighing,
Like the ash of his cigar;
Hopes dispelled and idly flying,
Like the smoke he puffs afar.

Thy cheroots so deftly fingered,
Madeya are silver-white,
But the prince that came and lingered,
Stole away the hamlet's light.

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terrific in their denunciations, in little receptacles fixed high up in trees.

With the view of guarding thoughtless or reckless people against themselves there were certain classes enumerated who should not under any circumstances be allowed to take the oath, or to appear as witnesses. These were:—1. Those who do not believe in the merit of good works. 2. Such people as trade with the goods of others. 3. Parties interested in the case, as well as their relations, friends, and enemies. 4. Great talkers. 5. Sick persons. 6. Old men. 7. Children. 8. Overbearing men. 9. Public singers. 10. Actresses. 11. Women of ill fame. 12. Goldsmiths. 13. Painters. 14. Blacksmiths. 15. Cobblers. 16. Asthmatic persons. 17. Low people. 18. Gluttons. 19. Gamblers. 20. Hot-tempered people. 21. Doctors. 22. Thieves. 23. Pregnant women. 24. Hermaphrodites, a by no means uncommon class in Burma. If, however, both parties to the suit gave their consent, some of these classes might be allowed to give testimony. Another curious old provision was that when one of the litigants produced a witness, he himself was not required to take the oath, while contrariwise, if he swore on the book, it was not imperative that he should call witnesses. [143]

The Book of the Oath is not quite fixed in its length, nor in the number of the imprecations which it threatens against false witnesses. Some copies are much more diffuse than others. It is always written on palm-leaf, in the ordinary character, and these in English courts are kept wrapped up in the ecclesiastical kabbalwè, usually sewn for greater convenience. The commonest version is as follows:—

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I will speak the truth. If I should be influenced by the laws of demerits, namely, passion, folly, anger, false opinion, immodesty, pride, scepticism, hard-heartedness, then may all these calamities attend me and my relations, wherever we may be, by land or by water, travelling or remaining quietly at home. May the nats who guard the sacred heavens, the athura nats and all other giants, the nats who guard the three Baskets of the Sacred Law, delivered by the most excellent Buddha, and all the other holy writings and sermons; may the nats, the guardians of the sacred relics the holy hairs, the teeth, the jawbone, the frontal bone, and all the other relics; the keepers and warders of countless shrines, all golden and made famous by sacred memories; the protectors of the images and figures of the supreme Buddha; may the nats who guard the sacred mount and all the hills of the Southern Island; the nats who watch and ward the mighty rivers, the lesser streams, the lakes, the torrents, cataracts, and whirlpools; the nats who preside over the vast forests and the single trees; the nats of the sun, the moon, the stars, and meteors, the clouds, winds, mists, and exhalations; may the nagā and the galôn, hideous dragons, and cruel birds, all bilus, ogres, demons, warlocks, all the evils that come from without the body; may all these spirits and ill things unite to slay me and mine, to the utmost limits of kinship, if I speak not the truth.

When I and my relations are on land, let all the hideous land creatures, tigers, bilus, elephants, male and female, demons and giants, buffaloes, poisonous serpents, the cobra, and the hamadryad, the scorpion, and the centipede; may they all seize, bite, crush, strangle, and devour us; may the earth open and swallow us up; a thunderbolt from heaven descend and annihilate us, if I speak not the truth.

When we travel by water may our boats sink and be shattered by storms; may crocodiles, writhing snakes, and ravenous fishes kill and devour us, that we suddenly die, perish, and come to utter destruction, if I speak not the truth.

May the five calamities occasioned by fire, water, thieves, governors and enemies oppress us; may we be subject to all the maladies of the body; may we be as fools and idiots, afflicted with madness and leprosy, with all kinds of loathsome disease and evils that deform the body, with itch, scurvy, ulcers, deafness, blindness, dysentery, the plague, and all manner of mental and corporal miseries; may we incur the hatred and punishments of judges and rulers; may we be for ever separated from our forefathers, children, and relations, throughout all succeeding worlds; may fire destroy our goods; lances, swords, arrows, and knives, and all sorts of weapons cut and pierce and maim our bodies; may I die instantly, vomiting up clotted, black blood before the assembled people, if I speak not the truth.

Moreover, if I speak not the truth, may I and all my family after death be instantly cast into the abyss of hell, there to wander for a cycle of worlds through the eight great hells, and all the smaller ones, suffering from all the torments of these places; and when at length I shall emerge thence, may I become a pyeitta, or a thurakè, and thereafter some hideous animal, passing through all the wretchedness of the four states of punishment. Finally, when after innumerable worlds I shall at length once more become man, may I be the slave of other men a hundred and a thousand times, if I speak not now the truth. 695 539

But if I speak truth, may I and all my relations escape the three calamities, the four states of punishment, and the five enemies; may all the ills in the body and all that are without the body keep far away; may our wealth, honour, and estimation ever increase, and when we die may we attain the happiness of men and dewas, and speedily entering on the noble path, reach the cloudless peace of Ne'ban.

A desire to avoid denouncing on themselves all these fearsome penalties led in the old times to a good deal of trying by ordeal, a form of decision which still prevails extensively in country districts, and occasionally was made use of even in Mandalay. The forms used are those familiar in old times in other parts of the world, such as eating consecrated rice, like the first English *corsnaed*, plunging the finger wrapped in a thin palm-leaf into melted tin; immersing accuser and accused in water to see who would remain longest below and prove his innocence or guilt. The yahans are usually present on these occasions, and recite certain formulæ beforehand, a great concourse of people assembling to see the test. The opposing parties wade into the river, or into a tank, up to the chest and then duck under, a couple of men holding a board over their heads to keep them down. The one that comes up first is cast in the case. Another form common at the pagodas is for both parties to resort thither, when the monks again recite the precepts and sundry other phrases. Then equal parts of wax are carefully weighed out, and from these candles are made for plaintiff and defendant. They are lighted simultaneously, and the holder of the candle which first burns out 695

CHAPTER LXI

SELECTIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

THE following is taken from the Mahā Yazawin :—

The Queen Shin-saw-bu

● 539 In Ava there lived a very learned pôngyi called Bamèsoda, and a rich man in the capital gave him his son Dhamma-sedi to bring up and instruct. This youth was possessed of very wonderful powers, due to virtues which he had exercised in previous existences. By means of these powers he brought to life one day a fowl which had been roasted and placed on the platter before his teacher. From this circumstance, to the present day, the place where the fowl scratched and sought its food is called Shwe Gyet-yet (the more popular legend assigns a different reason). On the same day it happened that a young hunter appeared in the monastery and begged the holy brother to teach him wisdom. As a present he had brought with him a roasted hare. He lifted the cover off the basket and the hare sprang up alive and healthy immediately and ran away. The pôngyi was very much struck at these two miracles, all the more because they happened on the same day, and he took the two highly gifted youths for his only scholars and taught them all he knew in the way of scholarship and mystic lore. Both were very zealous in their studies, but Dhamma-sedi learnt one letter more than his fellow-student.

539 173 Engwa-min, Thihathu, the Burman king, levied war upon the King of Rangoon, Bya-ngya-yan, and having defeated him, carried off his sister Saw Bọmi. The young lady, who now got the name of Shin-saw-bu, agreed to

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share his throne on the condition that she should be allowed to institute religious ceremonies to remind her of the holy pagoda of her own Talaing town. Captivated by her charms, the king consented, and recommended to her notice, as being the most likely to give her aid, the two most highly honoured pôngyis of the capital, Dhamma-sedi and Dhamma-bāla, the ex-hunter. The wily princess managed to arrange a love intrigue with the two yahans, and by their aid succeeded in escaping to Rangoon, where in no very great time she was placed on the throne, and built a golden monastery for the two holy men to live in. Out of gratitude she wished to raise one of her two friends to share the throne with her, but the choice was a hard matter, for they were both equally well favoured, and no man could say which was the more learned. She resolved therefore to put their wit to the test and to abide by the issue.

The two holy men were summoned to her audience-chamber, where before her throne were placed two alms-bowls: one perfectly empty and plain, but decorated with the royal insignia; the other more elaborately worked and full of the choicest delicacies. The rivals were bidden to place themselves, according to their liking, by the one or the other. Dhamma-bāla chose the juncates, but the wiser Dhamma-sedi walked straight to the royal thabeit. The latter therefore received the hand of the queen after he had left the order.

Dhamma-bāla was full of wrath and envy, and forthwith created countless armies by reciting powerful bedin linga over a bowl full of rice, every grain of which grew into a soldier. But Dhamma-sedi was skilful in the same arts, and by virtue of the additional letter which he had learned was able always to overcome the machinations of his opponent, so that at last Dhamma-balā saw himself overcome at all points, and took to flight to save his life. But he had not thrown off his long monkish robes, and his feet got entangled in them, and he fell and was overtaken by his pursuers, who killed him at a place where now the village Thengan Nyôn stands, "the spot where the yellow robe betrayed." The queen only reigned three years, but in that time she greatly enlarged and beautified the pagodas of Shwe Dagôn at Rangoon and Shwe Hmaw Daw at

● 539 173 Pegu. Dhamma-sedi reigned after her gloriously and highly honoured for thirty-one years.

The main points of this bit of Mahā Yaza-win history are correct. Shin-saw-bu was carried off in A.D. 1439 and did escape from Ava to be placed on the Peguan throne. Rangoon cantonments are to this day known among the Burmese as Shin-saw-bu Myo. King Dhamma-sedi was celebrated for his wisdom and for his intercourse with foreign powers. He received embassies from China, Siam, and Ceylon. He was also certainly originally a monk; his magic arts are another thing. His death is placed in A.D. 1491. The slight suggestion of the casket scene in the *Merchant of Venice* will be noticed.

The following is a favourite fable:—

Why Ants are found everywhere

539 All the animals of the forest came to the lion-king to pay him homage. The little ant came with the rest to bow down before the king of beasts, but the noblemen drove it away with scorn. When the king of the ants heard of it he was very angry, and sent a worm to creep into the ear of the lion and torment him. The lion roared aloud with pain, and all the animals came running from every side to offer their services and fight the enemy, wherever or whoever he might be. But none of them could do any real good. They could not get at the worm. At last, after many humble embassies, the king of the ants was prevailed upon to send one of his subjects, who crept into the lion's ear and pulled out the worm. Since that time the ants have enjoyed the privilege of living everywhere and in any country, while the other animals had all of them their special places assigned at the division of the earth.

The following, the fourteenth decision of the Princess Thudhammasari, is considered a legal precedent as well as the inculcation of a moral principle:—

The Dog, the Cat, and the Ichneumon

In the time of the Buddha Gawnagông, four pupils, a prince, a young noble, a rich man's son, and a poor man's son, received their education together in the country of Tekkatho. When they had finished their course they asked their teacher what was the value of learning. The sayā replied as follows:—Long ago there dwelt in the land of Gahapatiwetha four wealthy men who were great friends, and each sought to further his friends' plans as much as possible. At last one of them died and left an only son. The widow said to him, "My dear son, my husband, your father, Maung Ba is dead, and you take his place and succeed to all the property; but you are still very young. It would be well, therefore, if you went to your father's three friends to acquire learning and prudence from them." With that she gave him three hundred rupees and sent him off with a company of servants.

On the way they met a man leading a dog. "Hallo! you there," said the boy, "will you sell that dog?" "If you want to buy him," replied the stranger, "you must give me a hundred rupees." The youth paid the money and sent the dog back to his mother. She took it for granted that her late husband's three friends had approved of the purchase, and fed the dog and took great care of it.

Another day, after he had eaten his noontide meal, he met a man carrying a cat, and called out, "I say, you sir, will you sell that cat?" "Yes," said the man, "for a hundred rupees." The money was paid, and the cat sent back to his mother as before. She thought that this cat must have been recommended by the three merchants as a purchase, and took as great care of the cat as of the dog.

Another day, after his dinner, he came upon a man with an ichneumon in his arms, and wanted to buy it also. The man agreed to part with it like the others for a hundred rupees. The rich man's son paid the money and sent it back home. The mother, still under the same impression, looked after it as carefully as the dog and the cat.

Now the dog and the cat were domestic animals, and she kept them about the house without any concern, but the ichneumon was a wild creature, and she was in such a state about it that she wasted away. One day when the monk from the monastery came round on his usual alms'-begging tour, to receive his dole of rice, he noticed her

● 539 appearance and said, "Dear me, my good supportress, how thin you have grown." The rich man's widow replied, "Yes, the reason is this: I gave my son three hundred rupees, and sent him off to his father's three old friends to learn business habits, and one day he sends me a dog, the next a cat, and then again an ichneumon; and he gave a hundred rupees apiece for them. Now I don't mind about the dog and the cat, for they are house animals, and I get on very well with them; but the ichneumon is a jungle-beast, and the mere sight of it frightens me so that my body and limbs and eyes are all pining away." The yahan advised her to turn the creature loose in the jungle. It is wrong to disregard the counsel of one's teachers or one's parents, and so she set the ichneumon free, not, however, without giving it some food well soused in oil to keep it alive till it was able to look out for itself.

When the ichneumon got into the forest he fell a-thinking: the rich man's son gave a hundred rupees for me, and since I came into his possession I have been well looked after and fed, and better than all, I have now got my liberty again. I must repay him the debt of gratitude I owe. Then he found in a pool in the forest a ruby ring, and carried it off to the rich man's son, and said: "This is no common ring, it possesses the power of gratifying every wish of its owner. Put it on your finger, therefore, and be sure you do not allow any one else to wear it." Thereupon he went off to the jungle again.

The rich man's son wished, and during the night a great palace with a pya-that rose up before his house. The king of the country, with all his subjects, came to see the sight, and the king gave him his daughter in marriage. Soon after this the princess's spiritual teacher came to see if he could spy out her husband's charm. He looked everywhere, but he could see nothing but the ring. He therefore came to see the princess by herself, when the prince had gone out, and after making a great number of pretty speeches to her, asked if she was sure of her husband's love. "What a stupid question," said she; "he is only a rich man's son, and I am the daughter of a king." "Oh! if he is so very fond of you then, you have probably been allowed to wear his ring,"

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insinuated the pônna sadaw. "If I have not," returned she, "I would like to know who should?" Then the reverend gentleman went away.

A day or two afterwards, the princess asked her husband to let her put on his ring. He was very fond of her, and so he took it off and let her have it, but told her on no account to show it to any one, but to wear it constantly on her finger. The pônna came again another day when the rich man's son was out, and began talking in his usual smooth-tongued way. The princess said: "I have got that ring you were speaking about the other day." "Have you?" said he; "where is it?" "On my finger," she said, and showed it. He begged her to take it off and let him examine it, and her nurse, who was also present, at last prevailed on her to gratify the sadaw's wishes, and so at last she drew it off and handed it to him. As soon as he got it, he slipped it on his finger, changed himself into a crow, and flew away to the middle of the Thamôddaya ocean, whither no one could follow him, and there he stayed under a seven-roofed spire.

When her husband came back and heard what the pônna had done, he said to the princess: "You showed the ring, though I expressly told you not to do so, and now it is in the middle of the great Thamôddaya sea, and we shall never be able to get it back again." He then remained sunk in a deep melancholy.

One day a bevy of the daughters of the nat-dewas came to bathe in a pond grown over with water-lilies, not far from the house where the rich man's son was born. They took off their necklaces and jewellery and laid them down on the bank. The cat found them there, caught them up, and ran off and hid them. The houri maidens came to the cat and begged her to return their necklaces, saying they were only fit for nat-dewas and not for mortal men. The cat replied, "If I do, will you promise to make me a road to the place where the pônna sadaw is living under his pya-that in the middle of the Thamôddaya sea? That is the only condition on which I will give them back." So the daughters of nats made the road, and the cat crept stealthily along till she reached the spire, where she found

539 the pônna asleep, with the ring on his finger. She pulled it off and brought it back to her master as a return for his kindness, saying, "You paid a very large sum for me, and have fed and treated me well ever since." The sadaw, for his part, fell into the sea and was drowned, while the rich man's son, having now regained his talisman, had every wish of his heart gratified.

Some time afterwards a band of five hundred robbers came to kill the rich man's son and carry off his ring. The dog saw what their purpose was, and flew straight at the leader of the band, and bit him to death and dropped his body down a well. The other robbers were so frightened that they ran away. Next day the dog said to his master, "I did not get any sleep last night; I had hard work to do," and then he told how the robbers had come to slay his master and pillage the place, and how he had killed their leader, and so frightened the rest away. He finished by saying, "Now I have made some return for your kindness to me. I have been enabled to save your life and property." "Aha!" answered the rich man's son, "everybody called me a fool for giving a hundred rupees for you who are only an animal, but I owe all my fortune to three animals, each of which I purchased for that sum." Then he went away into the jungle and brought back the ichneumon and kept him in his house.

Now the ichneumon, the dog, and the cat, each of them asserted that he had a right to eat before the others. The ichneumon, because he first gave the ring to his master; the cat, because when the gift was lost she had taken the necklaces of the dewa daughters, and so by getting a road made for her, had recovered the ring and thus restored her master's fortunes; the dog, because, when five hundred robbers came to strip the rich man's son of what the others had given him, and to take his life, he killed their leader and dropped him into the well, whereupon the rest of the band ran away; "and thus," said the dog, "I am the preserver, not only of our master's property, but also of his life."

At length they agreed to leave the arbitration of their dispute to the decision of Princess Thudhammasari, the daughter of King Dhammarit, who reigned at Maadarit in the kingdom of Kambawsa. She dwelt in the palace of a Tabindaing (the princess who remains single to be married to the next king), and was well versed in the Ten Laws (1. To make religious offerings. 2. To keep the commandments. 3. To be charitable. 4. To be upright. 5. To be mild and gentle. 6. Not to give way to anger. 7. To be strict in observing all the religious ceremonies. 8. Not to oppress any one. 9. To exercise self-restraint. 10. Not to be familiar with inferiors); and learned in the civil as well as the criminal code. The fame of her wisdom had spread to the eight quarters of the world, so that the most eminent men from every country came to her for judgment.

The three animals therefore came before the princess, and the ichneumon opened the case as follows: "A certain rich man's son paid a hundred rupees for me, fed me and housed me well, and set me free in the forest. Having regard for his kindnesses, I gave him a ruby ring, by means of which he obtained a palace with a royal spire, which sprang out of the earth; therefore I am entitled to take precedence and to eat before the dog and the cat." The cat then followed, and recounted how the pônna had carried off the ring which the ichneumon had given her master, and how she had got it back again, and so had renewed all his fortunes. Then the dog stated his case, saying, "When robbers came to take from our master the ring which the ichneumon had given him, and which, when it was lost, was restored to him by the cat, I killed the leader of the band and then they all fled. Therefore I preserved not only my master's property, but also his life, and therefore I ought to have precedence over the other two."

When they had finished their arguments, Princess Thudhammasari pronounced her decision as follows: "The dog, in addition to saving his master's treasures, prolonged his life also; therefore he is entitled to the first place amongst you; but, of a truth, there are none among animals who so well understand how to repay a debt of gratitude as you three do."

Thus ends the story of the dog, the cat, and the

● 539 ichneumon, from which you may learn, that although man is superior to all animals, yet kindness shown to them will always meet with its reward.

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The following sermon of the Lord Buddha is the chief favourite with the Burmese. In its present form it is said to have been handed down by the favourite disciple, Ananda, who heard it from the lips of Shin Gautama himself. The Mingala-thut is one of the first books the young scholar gets into his hands after he has learnt the ordinary formulæ of worship. There are few Burmans, even in these later days, who cannot repeat the Pali text from end to end.

Mingala-thut, the Buddhist Beatitudes, or Chapter of Blessings

539 Praise be to Buddha the holy, the all-wise.

When the adorable and most excellent Buddha dwelt in the great monastery of Zetawun, built by the rich man Anātabein, in the country of Thawatti, there came to him a déwa at the hour of midnight, when the whole building was illuminated by the effulgence which streamed from his body. The déwa placed himself neither too far nor too near, neither to the right nor to the left, but in the proper spot, and after bowing low in humble obeisance, thus addressed the Buddha:

"Most adorable and excellent Buddha, during twelve long years, many déwas and men, desirous of reaching to the holiness of Ne'ban, have striven to discover what things are blessed, but they still remain in ignorance. Do thou therefore instruct us in those matters which are most blessed."

The Adorable replied:—

"Thou son of déwas, to shun the company of the foolish; to pay homage to the learned; to worship what ought to be worshipped; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to dwell among good men; to have with one's self the conciousness of good deeds done in a former state of existence; to guard well all one's

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actions; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to hear and see much in order to acquire knowledge; to study all science that leads not to sin; to make use of proper language; to acquire a knowledge of propriety of behaviour (from the Wini); these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to treat parents with tenderness and affection; to nourish well one's wife and children; to perform no action under the influence of sinful temptation; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to make offerings and give abundant alms; to act in accordance with the precepts of the law and of virtue; to assist relatives and friends; to perform virtuous actions; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to avoid sin, to be most instant and strenuous in such avoiding; to abstain from spirituous liquor; to remember always the principle of accumulation of merit; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to pay respect to all those who are worthy of regard; to be ever humble; to be ever contented; to be grateful for favours received; to listen to the preaching of the sacred law at the proper times; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to be patient and endure suffering; to rejoice in edifying discourse; to visit the holy men when occasion serves; to converse on religious subjects; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to practise religious austerities; to continue firm in the sublime truth; to study always to act in the most virtuous way; to keep the eyes firmly fixed on the attainment of Ne'ban; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to be unmoved; to be of tranquil mind; to be exempt from passion; to be perfectly composed and fearless amid all earthly dangers; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"O déwa, whoso possesses and observes these thirty-eight blessings shall never be overcome, and shall find

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happiness in all things. Déwa, mark thou them well, so shalt thou enjoy the peace of the Ariyas."

Thus the adorable Buddha replied.

Of this sermon the venerable Bishop Bigandet writes:—"Within a narrow compass, the Buddha has condensed an abridgment of almost all moral virtues. The first portion of these precepts contains injunctions to shun all that may prove an impediment to the practice of good works. The second part inculcates the necessity of regulating one's mind and intention for a regular discharge of the duties incumbent on each man in his separate station. Then follows a recommendation to bestow assistance on parents, relatives, and all men in general. Next to that we find recommended the virtues of humility, resignation, gratitude, and patience. After this, the preacher insists on the necessity of studying the law, visiting the religious, conversing on religious subjects. When this is done the hearer is commanded to study with great attention the four great truths, and keep his mind's eye ever fixed on the happy state of Ne'ban, which, though as yet distant, ought never to be lost sight of. Thus prepared, the hearer must be bent upon acquiring the qualifications befitting the true sage. Like the one mentioned by the Latin poet, who would remain firm, fearless, and unmoved, even in the midst of the ruins of the crumbling universe, the Buddhist sage must ever remain calm, composed, and unshaken among all the vicissitudes of life. There is again clearly pointed out the final end to be arrived at, viz. that of perfect mental stability. This state is the foreshadowing of that of Ne'ban."

Prefixed to every Burmese work is the phrase "Na-maw-tatha bagawa-daw araha-daw thamma thamôddatha," which has the same significance as the A.M.D.G. of the Jesuits —"Praise be to Bagawa (the Buddha as the displayer of the six glories), the holy, the all-wise."

764 643 175 present, were superintending the carrying off of the 108 (representing the number of divisions in the foot of the Lord Buddha, and the beads on the rosary) heaps of alms piled up in great mountains in a long shed to the east of the mausoleum. This was the last of the pious king, Maung Lun, Mindôn Min, the Convener of the Fifth Great Synod.

533 ●539 The following is the substance of a funeral dirge sung in Mandalay by a Rangoon man whose wife had died in the royal city:—

Gone, gone art thou, sweet wife; gone far away,
Fair still and charmful, stretched on thy cold bier,
As erst thou wert upon that joyous day
When first I wed thee; gladsome brought thee here,
And joyed to think that thou wert mine. Ah me!
The butterfly's silk wings are shred; no more,
Ne'er more to rest upon thy head, Mah Meit—
Sweet name for wife: "affectionate." Deplore
Her death ye nats that rule forests and streams,
The hills and vales, and greater ye who guard
The sacred law, the holy shrines, the beams
Of silent moon, and sunlight baking hard
The hot-scorched earth, not scorchèd more and seared
Than is the parchment of my tortured heart.
Nay, bear with me, good neighbours. Be not feared.
I am not mad. The nat-so hath no part
Of me or mine. The spaewife sure hath said it.

Ay, thou wert mine when last I trod the earth,
Ere yet, all sinful, I was born as man,
And yet again, in yet another birth,
I'll claim thee; when mayhap a happier kan,
A fairer sum of merit, hardly won,
Will lead us on, linked-armed, to linkèd death,
That so progressing, joyful we may run
Through all life's changes, and with single breath,
Through heavens and zân and rupa, we may bound
To Ne'ban, blissful home of rest. So mote it be.

Alas, thou wert from Hanthawaddy's plains,
And were we there, where thou so fain hadst stayed,
A stately pomp had honoured thy remains,
In silk and velvet wound, with gilded shade
Of wide umbrella's pride, and regal spire
Had towered to the skies, all seemly draped
With flowing cloths and princesses' attire,
Such as now thou dost wear, from earth escaped

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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To heavens of nats. Yea, and of fretted gold
With mirror-work inlaid had been this case,
The last sad dwelling of thy earthly mould;
But here it may not be, not in this place.

In Mamye's soil the stranger finds a tomb
As poor as doth the meanest in the land.
The trumpet's wailing note, the drum's low boom
May not be heard; all callous as the strand
That threats the sailor on a stormy night,
The law stands fast and bids the mourner pass
With smothered moan; and hurry from its sight
The alien clay. Far from thy home, alas!
Thy dirge e'en waxeth faint. Oh, Awgata,
The Lord, the Law, the Order, the Three Gems,
I bow me low. Grant me the holy calm.

[Pg. 602 is blank]

642 their own eyes, and made as much money as they
661 could, while they could. They collected the taxes
and as much more as they could get; they
administered the laws of Manu in civil and criminal
affairs, except when tempted to deviate therefrom
by good reasons; they carried out orders received
from Mandalay, when these orders fell in with their
own desires, or when they considered that disobedi-
[640] ence might be dangerous. It is a Burmese proverb
[539] that officials are one of the five great enemies of
mankind, and there was, I think (at all events in the
latter days of the kingdom), good reason to remember
it. And yet these officials were not bad men in
themselves; on the contrary, many of them were
men of good purpose, of natural honesty, of right
principles. In a well-organized system they would
have done well, but the system was rotten to the
core.

642 It may be asked why the Burmese people remained quiet under such a rule as this; why they did not rise and destroy it, raising a new one in its place; how it was that such a state of corruption lasted for a year, let alone for many years.

And the answer is this: However bad the government may have been, it had the qualities of its defects. If it did not do much to help the people, it did little to hinder them. To a great extent it left them alone to manage their own affairs in their own way. Burma in those days was like a great untended garden, full of weeds, full of flowers too, each plant striving after its own way, gradually evolving into higher forms. Now sometimes it seems to me to be like an old Dutch garden, with

I have seen and heard so much of this love of women and of its tragedies. Perhaps it is that to us it is usually the tragedies that are best remembered. Happiness is void of incident. And this love may be, after all, a good thing. But I do not know. Sometimes I think they would be happier if they could love less, if they could take love more quietly, more as a matter of course, as something that has to be gone through, as part of a life's training; not as a thing that swallows up all life and death and eternity in one passion. 000

In Burmese the love-songs are in a short, sweet rhythm, full of quaint conceits and word-music. I cannot put them into English verse, or give the flow of the originals in a translation. It always seems to me that Don Quixote was right when he said that a translation was like the wrong side of an embroidered cloth, giving the design without the beauty. But even in the plain, rough outline of a translation there is beauty here, I think: 584 533

From a Man to a Girl

The moon wooed the lotus in the night, the lotus was wooed by the moon, and my sweetheart is their child. The blossom opened in the night, and she came forth; the petals moved, and she was born. 584 539

She is more beautiful than any blossom; her face is as delicate as the dusk; her hair is as night falling over the hills; her skin is as bright as the diamond. She is very full of health, no sickness can come near her.

When the wind blows I am afraid, when the

584 539 breezes move I fear. I fear lest the south wind take her, I tremble lest the breath of evening woo her from me—so light is she, so graceful.

Her dress is of gold, even of silk and gold, and her bracelets are of fine gold. She hath precious stones in her ears, but her eyes, what jewels can compare unto them?

She is proud, my mistress; she is very proud, and all men are afraid of her. She is so beautiful and so proud that all men fear her.

In the whole world there is none anywhere that can compare unto her.

776 lives near the great hill can tell you that, for it all happened not so long ago. How long exactly no one can say, but not so long that the details of the story have become at all clouded by the mists of time.

776 539 They were brother and sister, these Popa Nats, and they had lived away up North. The brother was a blacksmith, and he was a very strong man. He was the strongest man in all the country; the blow of his hammer on the anvil made the earth tremble, and his forge was as the mouth of hell. No one was so much feared and so much sought after as he. And as he was strong, so his sister was beautiful beyond all the maidens of the time. Their father and mother were dead, and there was no one but those two, the brother and sister, so they loved each other dearly, and thought of no one else. The brother brought home no wife to his house by the forge. He wanted no one while he had his sister there, and when lovers came wooing to her, singing amorous songs in the amber dusk, she would have nothing to do with them. So they lived there together, he growing stronger and she more beautiful every day, till at last a change came.

The old king died, and a new king came to the throne, and orders were sent about to all the governors of provinces and other officials that the most beautiful maidens were to be sent down to the Golden City to be wives to the great king. So the governor of that country sent for the blacksmith and his sister to his palace, and told them there what orders he had received, and asked the blacksmith to give his sister that she might be sent as

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queen to the king. We are not told what arguments the governor used to gain his point, but only this, that when he failed, he sent the girl in unto his wife, and there she was persuaded to go. There must have been something very tempting, to one who was but a village girl, in the prospect of being even one of the lesser queens, of living in the palace, the centre of the world. So she consented at last, and her brother consented, and the girl was sent down under fitting escort to find favour in the eyes of her king. But the blacksmith refused to go. It was no good the governor saying such a great man as he must come to high honour in the Golden City, it was useless for the girl to beg and pray him to come with her—he always refused. So she sailed away down the great river, and the blacksmith returned to his forge.

As the governor had said, the girl was acceptable in the king's sight, and she was made at last one of the principal queens, and of all she had most power over the king. They say she was most beautiful, that her presence was as soothing as shade after heat, that her form was as graceful as a young tree, and the palms of her hands were like lotus blossoms. She had enemies, of course. Most of the other queens were her enemies, and tried to do her harm. But it was useless telling tales of her to the king, for the king never believed; and she walked so wisely and so well, that she never fell into any snare. But still the plots never ceased.

There was one day when she was sitting alone in the garden pavilion, with the trees making moving shadows all about her, that the king came to her.

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They talked for a time, and the king began to speak to her of her life before she came to the palace, a thing he had never done before. But he seemed to know all about it, nevertheless, and he spoke to her of her brother, and said that he, the king, had heard how no man was so strong as this blacksmith, the brother of the queen. The queen said it was true, and she talked on and on and praised her brother, and babbled of the days of her childhood, when he carried her on his great shoulder, and threw her into the air, catching her again. She was delighted to talk of all these things, and in her pleasure she forgot her discretion, and said that her brother was wise as well as strong, and that all the people loved him. Never was there such a man as he. The king did not seem very pleased with it all, but he said only that the blacksmith was a great man, and that the queen must write to him to come down to the city, that the king might see him of whom there was such great report.

Then the king got up and went away, and the queen began to doubt; and the more she thought the more she feared she had not been acting wisely in talking as she did, for it is not wise to praise anyone to a king. She went away to her own room to consider, and to try if she could hear of any reason why the king should act as he had done, and desire her brother to come to him to the city; and she found out that it was all a plot of her enemies. Herself they had failed to injure, so they were now plotting against her through her brother. They had gone to the king, and filled his ear with

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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slanderous reports. They had said that the queen's brother was the strongest man in all the kingdom. 'He was cunning, too,' they said, 'and very popular among all the people; and he was so puffed up with pride, now that his sister was a queen, that there was nothing he did not think he could do.' They represented to the king how dangerous such a man was in a kingdom, that it would be quite easy for him to raise such rebellion as the king could hardly put down, and that he was just the man to do such a thing. Nay, it was indeed proved that he must be disloyally plotting something, or he would have come down with his sister to the city when she came. But now many months had passed, and he never came. Clearly he was not to be trusted. Any other man whose sister was a queen would have come and lived in the palace, and served the king and become a minister, instead of staying up there and pretending to be a blacksmith.

The king's mind had been much disturbed by this, for it seemed to him that it must be in part true; and he went to the queen, as I have said, and his suspicions had not been lulled by what she told him, so he had ordered her to write to her brother to come down to the palace.

The queen was terrified when she saw what a mistake she had made, and how she had fallen into the trap of her enemies; but she hoped that the king would forget, and she determined that she would send no order to her brother to come. But the next day the king came back to the subject, and asked her if she had yet sent the letter, and she said 'No!' The king was very angry at this

776 disobedience to his orders, and he asked her how it
539 came that she had not done as he had commanded, and sent a letter to her brother to call him to the palace.

Then the queen fell at the king's feet and told him all her fears that her brother was sent for only to be imprisoned or executed, and she begged and prayed the king to leave him in peace up there in his village. She assured the king that he was loyal and good, and would do no evil.

The king was rather abashed that his design had been discovered, but he was firm in his purpose. He assured the queen that the blacksmith should come to no harm, but rather good; and he ordered the queen to obey him, threatening her that if she refused he would be sure that she was disloyal also, and there would be no alternative but to send and arrest the blacksmith by force, and punish her, the queen, too. Then the queen said that if the king swore to her that her brother should come to no harm, she would write as ordered. *And the king swore.*

So the queen wrote to her brother, and adjured him by his love to her to come down to the Golden City. She said she had dire need of him, and she told him that the king had sworn that no harm should come to him.

The letter was sent off by a king's messenger. In due time the blacksmith arrived, and he was immediately seized and thrown into prison to await his trial.

When the queen saw that she had been deceived, she was in despair. She tried by every way, by

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tears and entreaties and caresses, to move the king, but all without avail. Then she tried by plotting and bribery to gain her brother's release, but it was all in vain. The day for trial came quickly, and the blacksmith was tried, and he was condemned and sentenced to be burnt alive by the river on the following day.

On the evening of the day of trial the queen sent a message to the king to come to her; and when the king came reluctantly, fearing a renewal of entreaties, expecting a woman made of tears and sobs, full of grief, he found instead that the queen had dried her eyes and dressed herself still more beautifully than ever, till she seemed to the king the very pearl among women. And she told the king that he was right, and she was wrong. She said, putting her arms about him and caressing him, that she had discovered that it was true that her brother had been plotting against the king, and therefore his death was necessary. It was terrible, she said, to find that her brother, whom she had always held as a pattern, was no better than a traitor; but it was even so, and her king was the wisest of all kings to find it out.

The king was delighted to find his queen in this mood, and he soothed her and talked to her kindly and sweetly, for he really loved her, though he had given in to bad advice about the brother. And when the king's suspicions were lulled, the queen said to him that she had now but one request to make, and that was that she might have permission to go down with her maids to the river-shore in the early morning, and see herself the execution of her

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traitor brother. The king, who would now have granted her anything—anything she asked, except just that one thing, the life of her brother—gave permission; and then the queen said that she was tired and wished to rest after all the trouble of the last few days, and would the king leave her. So the king left her to herself, and went away to his own chambers.

Very early in the morning, ere the crimson flush upon the mountains had faded in the light of day, a vast crowd was gathered below the city, by the shore of the great river. Very many thousands were there, of many countries and peoples, crowding down to see a man die, to see a traitor burnt to death for his sins, for there is nothing men like so much as to see another man die.

Upon a little headland jutting out into the river the pyre was raised, with brushwood and straw, to burn quickly, and an iron post in the middle to which the man was to be chained. At one side was a place reserved, and presently down from the palace in a long procession came the queen and her train of ladies to the place kept for her. Guards were put all about to prevent the people crowding; and then came the soldiers, and in the midst of them the blacksmith; and amid many cries of 'Traitor, traitor!' and shouts of derision, he was bound to the iron post within the wood and the straw, and the guards fell back.

The queen sat and watched it all, and said never a word. Fire was put to the pyre, and it crept rapidly up in long red tongues with coils of black

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smoke. It went very quickly, for the wood was very dry, and a light breeze came laughing up the river and helped it. The flames played about the man chained there in the midst, and he made never a sign ; only he looked steadily across at the purple mountain where his home lay, and it was clear that in a few more moments he would be dead. There was a deep silence everywhere.

Then of a sudden, before anyone knew, before a hand could be held out to hinder her, the queen rose from her seat and ran to the pyre. In a moment she was there and had thrown herself into the flames, and with her arms about her brother's neck she turned and faced the myriad eyes that glared upon them—the queen, in all the glory of her beauty, glittering with gems, and the man with great shackled bare limbs, dressed in a few rags, his muscles already twisted with the agony of the fire. A great cry of horror came from the people, and there was the movement of guards and officers rushing to stop the fire ; but it was all of no use. A great flash of red flames came out of the logs, folding these twain like an imperial cloak, a whirl of sparks towered into the air, and when one could see again the woman and her brother were no longer there. They were dead and burnt, and the bodies mingled with the ashes of the fire. She had cost her brother his life, and she went with him into death.

Some days after this a strange report was brought to the palace. By the landing-place near the spot where the fire had been was a great fig-tree. It

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was so near to the landing-place, and was such a magnificent tree, that travellers coming from the boats, or waiting for a boat to arrive, would rest in numbers under its shade. But the report said that something had happened there. To travellers sleeping beneath the tree at night it was stated that two Nats had appeared, very large and very beautiful, a man Nat and a woman Nat, and had frightened them very much indeed. Noises were heard in the tree, voices and cries, and a strange terror came upon those who approached it. Nay, it was even said that men had been struck by unseen hands and severely hurt, and others, it was said, had disappeared. Children who went to play under the tree were never seen again: the Nats took them, and their parents sought for them in vain. So the landing-place was deserted, and a petition was brought to the king, and the king gave orders that the tree should be hewn down. So the tree was cut down, and its trunk was thrown into the river; it floated away out of sight, and nothing happened to the men who cut the tree, though they were deadly afraid.

The tree floated down for days, until at last it stranded near a landing-place that led to a large town, where the governor of these parts lived; and at this landing-place the portents that had frightened the people at the great city reappeared and terrified the travellers here too, and they petitioned the governor.

The governor sought out a great monk, a very holy man learned in these matters, and sent him to inquire, and the monk came down to the tree and

spoke. He said that if any Nats lived in the tree, 776
they should speak to him and tell him what they 539
wanted. 'It is not fit,' he said, 'for great Nats to terrify the poor villagers at the landing-place. Let the Nats speak and say what they require. All that they want shall be given.' And the Nats spake and said that they wanted a place to live in where they could be at peace, and the monk answered for the governor that all his land was at their disposal. 'Let the Nats choose,' he said; 'all the country is before them.' So the Nats chose, and said that they would have Popa Mountain, and the monk agreed.

The Nats then left the tree and went away, far away inland, to the great Popa Mountain, and took up their abode there, and all the people there feared and reverenced them, and even made to their honour two statues with golden heads and set them up on the mountain.

This is the story of the Popa Nats, the greatest Nats of all the country of Burma, the guardian spirits of the mysterious mountain. The golden heads of the statues are now in one of our treasuries, put there for safe custody during the troubles, though it is doubtful if even then anyone would have dared
to steal them, so greatly are the Nats feared. And [782]
the hunters and the travellers there must offer to the Nats little offerings, if they would be safe in these forests, and even the young man must obtain permission from the Nats before he marry.

I think these stories that I have told, stories 776
selected from very many that I have heard, will show what sort of spirits these are that the Burmese

CHAPTER XXI

DEATH, THE DELIVERER

'The end of my life is near at hand; seven days hence, like a man who rids himself of a heavy load, I shall be free from the burden of my body.'—*Death of the Buddha.*

539 THERE is a song well known to all the Burmese, the words of which are taken from the sacred writings. It is called the story of Ma Pa Da, and it was first told to me by a Burmese monk, long ago, when I was away on the frontier.

It runs like this:

In the time of the Buddha, in the city of Thawatti, there was a certain rich man, a merchant, who had many slaves. Slaves in those days, and, indeed, generally throughout the East, were held very differently to slaves in Europe. They were part of the family, and were not saleable without good reason, and there was a law applicable to them. They were not *hors de la loi*, like the slaves of which we have conception. There are many cases quoted of sisters being slaves to sisters, and of brothers to brothers, quoted not for the purpose of saying that this was an uncommon occurrence, but merely of showing points of law in such cases.

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One day in the market the merchant bought another slave, a young man, handsome and well mannered, and took him to his house, and kept him there with his family and the other slaves. The young man was earnest and careful in his work, and the merchant approved of him, and his fellow-slaves liked him. But Ma Pa Da, the merchant's daughter, fell in love with him. The slave was much troubled at this, and he did his best to avoid her; but he was a slave and under orders, and what could he do? When she would come to him secretly and make love to him, and say, 'Let us flee together, for we love each other,' he would refuse, saying that he was a slave, and the merchant would be very angry. He said he could not do such a thing. And yet when the girl said, 'Let us flee, for we love each other,' he knew that it was true, and that he loved her as she loved him; and it was only his honour to his master that held him from doing as she asked.

But because his heart was not of iron, and there are few men that can resist when a woman comes and woos them, he at last gave way; and they fled away one night, the girl and the slave, taking with them her jewels and some money. They travelled rapidly and in great fear, and did not rest till they came to a city far away where the merchant would never, they thought, think of searching for them.

Here, in this city where no one knew of their history, they lived in great happiness, husband and wife, trading with the money they had with them.

And in time a little child was born to them.

About two or three years after this it became necessary for the husband to take a journey, and he started forth with his wife and child. The journey was a very long one, and they were unduly delayed; and so it happened that while still in the forest the wife fell ill, and could not go on any further. So the husband built a hut of branches and leaves, and there, in the solitude of the forest, was born to them another little son.

The mother recovered rapidly, and in a little time she was well enough to go on. They were to start next morning on their way again; and in the evening the husband went out, as was his custom, to cut firewood, for the nights were cold and damp.

Ma Pa Da waited and waited for him, but he never came back.

The sun set and the dark rose out of the ground, and the forest became full of whispers, but he never came. All night she watched and waited, caring for her little ones, fearful to leave them alone, till at last the gray light came down, down from the sky to the branches, and from the branches to the ground, and she could see her way. Then, with her new-born babe in her arms and the elder little fellow trotting by her side, she went out to search for her husband. Soon enough she found him, not far off, stiff and cold beside his half-cut bundle of firewood. A snake had bitten him on the ankle, and he was dead.

So Ma Pa Da was alone in the great forest, but a girl still, with two little children to care for.

But she was brave, despite her trouble, and she determined to go on and gain some village. She took her baby in her arms and the little one by the hand, and started on her journey.

16;Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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And for a time all went well, till at last she came to a stream. It was not very deep, but it was too deep for the little boy to wade, for it came up to his neck, and his mother was not strong enough to carry both at once. So, after considering for a time, she told the elder boy to wait. She would cross and put the baby on the far side, and return for him.

'Be good,' she said; 'be good, and stay here quietly till I come back'; and the boy promised.

The stream was deeper and swifter than she thought; but she went with great care and gained the far side, and put the baby under a tree a little distance from the bank, to lie there while she went for the other boy. Then, after a few minutes' rest, she went back.

She had got to the centre of the stream, and her little boy had come down to the margin to be ready for her, when she heard a rush and a cry from the side she had just left; and, looking round, she saw with terror a great eagle sweep down upon the baby, and carry it off in its claws. She turned round and waved her arms and cried out to the eagle, 'He! he!' hoping it would be frightened and drop the baby. But it cared nothing for her cries or threats, and swept on with long curves over the forest trees, away out of sight.

Then the mother turned to gain the bank once more, and suddenly she missed her son who had been waiting for her. He had seen his mother wave her arms; he had heard her shout, and he thought she was calling him to come to her. So the brave little man walked down into the water,

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

539 and the black current carried him off his feet at once. He was gone, drowned in the deep water below the ford, tossing on the waves towards the sea.

No one can write of the despair of the girl when she threw herself under a tree in the forest. The song says it was very terrible.

At last she said to herself, 'I will get up now and return to my father in Thawatti; he is all I have left. Though I have forsaken him all these years, yet now that my husband and his children are dead, my father will take me back again. Surely he will have pity on me, for I am much to be pitied.'

So she went on, and at length, after many days, she came to the gates of the great city where her father lived.

At the entering of the gates she met a large company of people, mourners, returning from a funeral, and she spoke to them and asked them:

'Who is it that you have been burying to-day so grandly with so many mourners?'

And the people answered her, and told her who it was. And when she heard, she fell down upon the road as one dead; for it was her father and mother who had died yesterday, and it was their funeral train that she saw. They were all dead now, husband and sons and father and mother; in all the world she was quite alone.

So she went mad, for her trouble was more than she could bear. She threw off all her clothes, and let down her long hair and wrapped it about her naked body, and walked about raving.

At last she came to where the Buddha was teaching, seated under a fig-tree. She came up to the Buddha, and told him of her losses, and how she had no one left; and she demanded of the Buddha that he should restore to her those that she had lost. And the Buddha had great compassion upon her, and tried to console her. 539 ●

'All die,' he said; 'it comes to everyone, king and peasant, animal and man. Only through many deaths can we obtain the Great Peace. All this sorrow,' he said, 'is of the earth. All this is passion which we must get rid of, and forget before we reach heaven. Be comforted, my daughter, and turn to the holy life. All suffer as you do. It is part of our very existence here, sorrow and trouble without any end.' 539 779 761

But she would not be comforted, but demanded her dead of the Buddha. Then, because he saw it was no use talking to her, that her ears were deaf with grief, and her eyes blinded with tears, he said to her that he would restore to her those who were dead.

'You must go,' he said, 'my daughter, and get some mustard-seed, a pinch of mustard-seed, and I can bring back their lives. Only you must get this seed from the garden of him near whom death has never come. Get this, and all will be well.'

So the woman went forth with a light heart. It was so simple, only a pinch of mustard-seed, and mustard grew in every garden. She would get the seed and be back very quickly, and then the Lord Buddha would give her back those she loved who had died. She clothed herself again and tied up her hair, and went cheerfully and asked at the first

539 771 761 house, 'Give me a pinch of mustard-seed,' and it was given readily. So with her treasure in her hand she was going forth back to the Buddha full of delight, when she remembered.

'Has ever anyone died in your household?' she asked, looking round wistfully.

The man answered 'Yes,' that death had been with them but recently. Who could this woman be, he thought, to ask such a question? And the woman went forth, the seed dropping from her careless fingers, for it was of no value. So she would try again and again, but it was always the same. Death had taken his tribute from all. Father or mother, son or brother, daughter or wife, there was always a gap somewhere, a vacant place beside the meal. From house to house throughout the city she went, till at last the new hope faded away, and she learned from the world, what she had not believed from the Buddha, that death and life are one.

[772] So she returned, and she became a nun, poor soul! taking on her the two hundred and twenty-seven vows, which are so hard to keep that nowadays nuns keep but five of them.[1]

779 761 This is the teaching of the Buddha, that death is inevitable; this is the consolation he offers, that all men must know death; no one can escape death;

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[772] [1] These five vows are:

1. Not to take life.
2. To be honest.
3. To tell the truth.
4. To abstain from intoxicants.
5. Chastity.

16;Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FOREST OF TIME

'The gate of that forest was Death.'

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THERE was a great forest. It was full of giant trees that grew so high and were so thick overhead that the sunshine could not get down below. And there were huge creepers that ran from tree to tree climbing there, and throwing down great loops of rope. Under the trees, growing along the ground, were smaller creepers full of thorns, that tore the wayfarer and barred his progress. The forest, too, was full of snakes that crept along the ground, so like in their gray and yellow skins to the earth they travelled on that the traveller trod upon them unawares and was bitten; and some so beautiful with coral red and golden bars that men would pick them up as some dainty jewel till the snake turned upon them.

Here and there in this forest were little glades wherein there were flowers. Beautiful flowers they were, with deep white cups and broad glossy leaves hiding the purple fruit; and some had scarlet blossoms that nodded to and fro like drowsy men,

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and there were long festoons of white stars. The air there was heavy with their scent. But they were all full of thorns, only you could not see the thorns till after you had plucked the blossom.

This wood was pierced by roads. Many were very broad, leading through the forest in divers ways, some of them stopping now and then in the glades, others avoiding them more or less, but none of them were straight. Always, if you followed them, they bent and bent until after much travelling you were where you began; and the broader the road, the softer the turf beneath it, the sweeter the glades that lined it, the quicker did it turn.

One road there was that went straight, but it was far from the others. It led among the rocks and cliffs that bounded one side of the valley. It was very rough, very far from all the glades in the lowlands. No flowers grew beside it, there was no moss or grass upon it, only hard sharp rocks. It was very narrow, bordered with precipices.

There were many lights in this wood, lights that flamed out like sunsets and died, lights that came like lightning in the night and were gone. This wood was never quite dark, it was so full of these lights that flickered aimlessly.

There were men in this wood who wandered to and fro. The wood was full of them.

They did not know whither they went; they did not know whither they wished to go. Only this they knew, that they could never keep still; for the keeper of this wood was Time. He was armed with a keen whip, and kept driving them on and on; there was no rest.

Many of these when they first came loved the wood. The glades, they said, were very beautiful, the flowers very sweet. And so they wandered down the broad roads into the glades, and tried to lie upon the moss and love the flowers; but Time would not let them. Just for a few moments they could have peace, and then they must on and on. But they did not care. 'The forest is full of glades,' they said; 'if we cannot live in one, we can find another.' And so they went on finding others and others, and each one pleased them less.

Some few there were who did not go to the glades at all. 'They are very beautiful,' they said, 'but these roads that pass through them, whither do they lead? Round and round and round again. There is no peace there. Time rules in those glades, Time with his whip and goad, and there is no peace. What we want is rest. And those lights,' they said, 'they are wandering lights, like the summer lightning far down in the South, moving hither and thither. We care not for such lights. Our light is firm and clear. What we desire is peace; we do not care to wander for ever round this forest, to see for ever those shifting lights.'

And so they would not go down the winding roads, but essayed the path upon the cliffs. 'It is narrow,' they said, 'it has no flowers, it is full of rocks, but it is straight. It will lead us somewhere, not round and round and round again—it will take us somewhere. And there is a light,' they said, 'before us, the light of a star. It is very small now, but it is always steady; it never flickers or wanes.

It is the star of Truth. Under that star we shall find that which we seek.'

And so they went upon their road, toiling upon the rocks, falling now and then, bleeding with wounds from the sharp points, sore-footed, but strong-hearted. And ever as they went they were farther and farther from the forest, farther and farther from the glades and the flowers with deadly scents; they heard less and less the crack of the whip of Time falling upon the wanderers' shoulders.

The star grew nearer and nearer, the light grew greater and greater, the false lights died behind them, until at last they came out of the forest, and there they found the lake that washes away all desire under the sun of Truth.

They had won their way. Time and Life and Fight and Struggle were behind them, could not follow them, as they came, weary and footsore, into the Great Peace.

And of those who were left behind, of those who stayed in the glades to gather the deadly flowers, to be driven ever forward by the whip of Time—what of them? Surely they will learn. The kindly whip of Time is behind: he will never let them rest in such a deadly forest; they must go ever forward; and as they go they grow more and more weary, the glades are more and more distasteful, the heavy-scented blossoms more and more repulsive. They will find out the thorns too. At first they forgot the thorns in the flowers. 'The blossoms are beautiful,' they said; 'what care we for the thorns? Nay, the thorns are good. It is a pleasure to fight with them.' What would the forest be without its thorns?

If we could gather the flowers and find no thorns, we should not care for them. The more the thorns, the more valuable the blossoms.'

So they said, and they gathered the blossoms, and they faded. But the thorns did not fade; they were ever there. The more blossoms a man had gathered, the more thorns he had to wear, and Time was ever behind him. They wanted to rest in the glades, but Time willed it ever they must go forward; no going back, no rest, ever and ever on. So they grew very weary.

'These flowers,' they said at last, 'are always the same. We are tired of them; their smell is heavy; they are dead. This forest is full of thorns only. How shall we escape from it? Ever as we go round and round we hate the flowers more, we feel the thorns more acutely. We must escape! We are sick of Time and his whip, our feet are very, very weary, our eyes are dazzled and dim. We, too, would seek the Peace. We laughed at those before who went along the rocky path; we did not want peace; but now it seems to us the most beautiful thing in the world. Will Time never cease to drive us on and on? Will these lights *never* cease to flash to and fro?'

And so each man at last turns to the straight road. He will find out. Every man will find out at last that the forest is hateful, that the flowers are deadly, that the thorns are terrible; every man will learn to fear Time.

And then, when the longing for peace has come, he will go to the straight way and find it; no man will remain in the forest for ever. He will learn.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

539 When he is very, very weary, when his feet are full of thorns, and his back scarred with the lashes of Time—great, kindly Time, the schoolmaster of the world—he will learn.

Not till he has learnt will he desire to enter into the straight road.

But in the end all men will come.

This is a Burman allegory of Buddhism. It was told me long ago. I trust I have not spoilt it in the retelling.

THE END

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21: Htin Aung

APl Burma
Burmese AP4

536, 539 ●

[For information on the Burmese drama, and for translations and abstracts of various Burmese plays, see category 116, pp. 6-251.]

779* doctrine of annihilation from his own reading of the Buddhist literature
775-* available to him and the exposition of a few, more instructed Buddhists? The latter would seem to be the case, for he speaks of 'Buddhist doctors'
[792] rather than 'Burmese doctors,' he refers specifically to a treatise he has translated and says that the monks in general "have no ardour for study." "I have met with a great number of laymen who were incomparably better informed."[21]

779* Yet the existence of many lax and ignorant monks — a circumstance
775* which Bigandet attributes to the relaxation of that centralised discipline
792 which had hitherto sustained the Order — does not mean that there were no devoted and zealous scholars at the same time. From other records we know that there were, and the Bishop himself refers to them. It is possible that they assisted him in his studies. He mentions visits to dignitaries. But it is also possible that some of these more able monks were amongst those who told him that a 'perfected being ... retains his individuality in Neibban' though unable to explain this condition further.

Later observers confirm Bishop Bigandet's conclusion that, in popular opinion, Nibbāna did not mean annihilation. It is a mystery, observes Sir George Scott, but it is not a "nothing." "Matter-of-fact Western heretics are mistaken when they conclude that the common illustration of the dying flame means annihilation." He cites an interesting funeral dirge, sung in Mandalay:

[839] Gone, gone art thou, sweet wife; gone far away ...
And yet again, in yet another birth,
I'll claim thee; when mayhap a happier *kan*,
A fairer sum of merit, hardly won,
Will lead us on, linked-armed, to linked death,
That so progressing, joyful we may run
Through all life's changes, and with single breath,
Through heavens and *zahs* and *rupa*, we may bound
To neh'ban, blissful home of rest.[22]

779* In his popular, but well-informed accounts of Burmese life, Fielding
775* Hall also emphasises this positive belief. "It is a hard teaching, this of the Buddha ... that when life goes out, this thing which we call "I" goes out with it.... To the Burmese villager that is not so. He cannot grasp, he cannot endure that it should be so."[23] In a later book, Fielding Hall suggests that there is, indeed, no reason why the Burmese villager should

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[21] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, footnote, p. 98, p. 252, p. 315.

[22] *The Burman, His Life and Notions* (1882), Vol. I, chap. xi, p. 125ff.; Vol. II, chap. xxxv, pp. 351, 352.

[23] *The Soul of a People*, chap. xxi, pp. 288, 289; chap. xxii, pp. 290, 291.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER IV

THE PARADOX OF BUDDHISM

1. *"At the End of the World"*

A certain monk indulged in philosophical speculations, though this was against the teaching of the Buddha. The monk wanted to know where the world ended. He therefore left the Buddha and set out on a journey through the skies, questioning the gods of the different heavens, one after another. He questioned the gods who are called the Servants of the Four Kings. "Where does the world end?" But they replied, "Ask the Four Kings." When he came to the Four Kings, however, they replied, "Ask the Thirty Three Gods."

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Finally the monk came to the gods who are called the Servants of Brahmā.

"No," they replied to his question, "we ourselves do not know where the world ends. But ask Brahmā — the Great Brahmā, The Supreme One, the Mighty One, the All-seeing One, the Creator, the Father of all that are and are to be. He will know."

As they spoke, Brahmā himself appeared.

The monk put his question.

"I am the Great Brahmā," he answered, "the Supreme One, the Mighty One, the Father of all that are and are to be."

"I do not ask you, friend," said the monk, "whether you are indeed all that you now say. What I want to find out is where the world ends, where the four great elements cease, leaving no trace behind."

The great Brahmā hastily took the monk by the arm, and led him aside.

"Monk," he confessed, "I do not myself know where the world ends. But I did not want these gods who are my servants to hear me say so. Therefore I gave no answer in their presence. They think I know everything. But I do not know where the world ends. You had better go back to Buddha and ask him. Accept whatever answer he may give."[1]

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We venture to extend this parable from the scriptures. We can imagine the monk explaining that the Buddha will not discuss such questions; he does not speak plainly enough about Nibbāna.

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[1] D. i, 215ff. (cf Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part I, pp. 280 ff.; cf. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 308).

'The night fell. The fig tree showered red petals on the yellow robe of 775*
the future Buddha seated at its feet. Lost in meditation, knowing that the 779*
hour of his enlightenment was approaching, Gotama remained immobile. 539
In the first watch of the night he acquired the knowledge of previous existence. Then he attained the divine outlook; finally, before the dawn, he penetrated the secret of Dependent Origination. And at that moment the universe was shaken to its very depths.'[6]

Then the Buddha, surrounded by glory and homage, spake these words:

Through birth and rebirth's endless round,
Seeking in vain, I hastened on,
To find who framed this edifice.
What misery! — birth incessantly!

O builder! I've discovered thee!
This fabric thou shalt ne'er rebuild!
Thy rafters all are broken now,
And pointed roof demolished lies!
This mind has demolition reached,
And seen the last of all desire![7]

Whatever else this famous enigmatic verse may mean, at least it is an 775*
exclamation of relief and triumph. The Truth now is known, the Way 779*
discovered.

The consequent gospel is proclaimed at Benares, and historians agree that the text of this 'sermon' enshrines an authentic, original utterance.

It is the proclamation of a Middle Way avoiding two extremes — the extreme of sensuality and the extreme of self-mortification. But it is also the proclamation of a Goal, the promise of release, emancipation, deliverance. There would have been no gospel in announcing a new discipline unless this new discipline held the assurance of something better and different as its goal. And this goal is in fact twice emphasised in the short passage. "Now this very midway course, well understood by men so gone, making vision, making knowledge, leads on to peace, to wisdom, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna."[8]

Without a Nibbana, Buddhism would not be a gospel — a point emphasised in the *Udāna*: "There is, bhikkus, that wherein is no birth, which is not the result of becoming, which is unmade, unconditioned.

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[6] d'Eypernon, *Les paradoxes du Bouddhisme*, Part I, chap. II, p. 82.

[7] Translation: H. C. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, 6th issue, chap. I, section 8, p. 83.

[8] Cf. Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Sakya*, p. 55.

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APPENDIX

NOTE A

BURMESE *NAT* LEGENDS

I

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How the Burmese regard the *Nats* is illustrated by an account of the story and cultus of U Yin Gyi, described as 'a national god of the Burmans of Lower Burma.' Written by a Burmese writer, Maung Tha Kin, this account was published in the *Journal of the Burma Research Society,* Vol. xiv, Part 1, April 1924.

The writer observes that U Yin Gyi is 'quite a young god' compared with the Thirty Seven gods of Upper Burma, but 'he has pushed his way up so pluckily that in Lower Burma at least he has practically superseded these spiritual princes.'

The story goes, according to one version of the legend, that U Yin Gyi was once a young Burmese lumberman in the service of a timber merchant. He was also a very skilful player on the Burmese harp. Timber, hewn and collected in 'enchanted forests,' and formed into log rafts, was brought down the rivers to the town of Dalla. The fairies in the forests were so enchanted by the young musician that on one occasion they clung to the raft and prevented its voyage downstream. The perplexed timber merchant realised that some member of his crew was wanted by the spirit world. Lots were cast and three times the lot went to U Yin Gyi. He was therefore seized, securely bound and thrown overboard.

After this death by drowning and "his birth as a god, U Yin Gyi committed many acts of depredations in the districts... In consequence, U Yin Gyi was given a place in the pantheon of national gods by the frightened populace and regularly propitiated.... The propitiation is done by an offering of vegetarian diet."

Pictured as a cruel, capricious despot riding a ferocious tiger, this angry god was held responsible for diseases and 'accidents that no doctor could cure.' Since the beginning of the present century, however, the people have noticed a change in his behaviour. "He is now believed to have taken to religion, to keep sabbath and to lead the life of a saintly god," observes Maung Tha Kin; "but the people still entertain the belief that his council or assembly of under-gods still do continue to help or harass the people at will as of yore."

The god's new interest in religion does not, however, prevent him showing favour to evil-doers. At least, these evil-doers still expect his help, for it is observed that no organised theft, robbery or dacoity is ever committed in Lower Burma without having made offerings to U Yin Gyi and without invoking his aid for protection from arrest and capture. Those who premeditate such a crime mark a 'circular fence' on the ground, using a stick or pouring water to mark the boundary. They remain within the fence until a meal has been cooked and an offering made to the god. "Neither spitting nor answering the call of nature within that period is permitted. Even if unintentionally any of these rules is transgressed by any one of the party, the plan hatched is abandoned." Gamblers and speculators also invoke the help of the *Nat*.

Despite the opposition of some of the monks, public festivals in honour of this *Nat* are maintained. In these festivals U Yin Gyi shares the honours with another *Nat*, Koe Myo Yin, to whom he seems to owe allegiance. The writer describes one of these festivals.

Facing each other at a cross road are two miniature palaces of bamboo and paper. In one of these palaces U Yin Gyi is pictured as a youthful musician, flanked by two ghostly lieutenants.

During the festival there is a play, when the *Nats* are represented by human actors. First they are reverently invited to attend the festival and accept the offerings of food made to them. Then the *Nat*, Koe Myo Yin, comes majestically to the front of the stage, followed by U Yin Gyi. A dialogue follows in which U Yin Gyi is enjoined by his overlord to take due care of the people and protect them from danger and epidemic. U Yin Gyi emphasises his assurances that he will do so by summoning his army of undergods. Then the two Nats depart, "leaving the undergods to partake of the offerings made to them to their hearts content. The undergods, with dishevelled hair, dressed uncouthly in rags, painted with hideous hues and holding divers kinds of mock weapons of warfare, would make a sudden rush from all sides into the midst of the crowd, go to the altars and literally devour the *kauk hnyin* rice and other eatables. Thereafter they would give a merry devil dance, making weird noises and sounds for some time; and depart — bringing the festival aprubptly to an end."

In this account we may note the suggestion that the chief *Nats*, though still capricious, are no longer objects of dread but can be expected to be benevolent, if duly honoured. We may also note the opposition of the more zealous monks to this cultus.

It is interesting to compare this description of a modern *Nat* cultus with stories belonging to an earlier period, told in *The Chronicle of the City of Tagaung*,[1] stories of palace intrigues which show the mingling of legend, Buddhist piety and animistic belief. King Thambawka, it is related, "regarded not the law of truth, he heeded not nor revered the Three Gems"[2] . . . nor recked he aught of virtue, piety or holiness, scorned the

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[1] *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. XI, Part I (1921), pp. 29ff. (translated by Pe Maung Tin and G. H. Luce; cf. their Introd. to *The Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma)*.

[2] The Three Gems, i.e., the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Samgha.

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practice of meditation, learning and love. Therefore because he forgot the law of truth, his glory and dominion waned; his queen broke faith with him, and took her pleasure with the Naga king, by whom she conceived." Her sons were born blind because "the breath of the Nagas had come upon them."[3]

The king soon died, and his successors only survived for brief periods. The Naga king from the spirit world is held responsible for their death. 'Twisting his way into the hollow of the palace post, the Naga prince came to the world of men and reigned seven years with the queen.'

A youth 'from a Brahmin village' resolved to end this state of affairs and seize the kingdom. He prepared himself by religious observance. 'He bathed his body and cleansed it; bowed down and did obeissance, worshipping the Three Gems, his great grandparents, grandfather, grandmother, mother and father, the spirits who keep watch over the great religion, the spirits who keep watch over cities and border villages. . . ."

On his way to the capital, halting at a village 'where of old the coming Buddhas sported and made merry,' the youth is encouraged by the god, Sakra, who 'with his fairy horse and fairy raiment went ahead with the prince in human guise.' Thus assisted, the youth invades the royal town, takes possession and is married to the Queen. Warned by Sakra to be watchful, the youth questions the Queen about the deaths of the previous kings. The Queen then confesses her intrigues with the Naga prince and helps him in a plot to seize the Naga, who is slain by the youthful and zealous conqueror.

NOTE B

BUDDHIST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN BURMA

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The chief lessons taught in the monastic schools in Burma are the following:

I. *The Three Jewels:*

I take refuge in the Buddha,
I take refuge in the Dhamma
I take refuge in the Saṃgha.

II. *The Five Precepts:*

Not to kill
Not to steal
Not to lie
Not to commit adultery
Not to drink strong drink.

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[3] Nagas are "fabulous creatures that sleep deep down below:" cf. Scott, *The Burman*, Vol. I, chap. XXIX, p. 352.

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III. *The Mingalā Thot:* The Song of Great Blessing. (*Mahāmangala Sutta: Sutta Nipāta* II. 4).

"Thus have I heard:
Once when the Blessed One was at Jetavana in Anathapindika's Park, as night came on, a beautiful *Nat*[1] drew near, lighting up the whole place with his presence. He greeted the Blessed One, and then standing on one side addressed him in this verse:

"What many men and deities
Desiring Bliss, have sought to find --
Come tell me, Master, what it is
That brings most blessing to mankind."

To whom the Sage made answer:

"To quit the fools, to court the wise,
This is the highest Paradise:

"To pay respect where it is due,
So shall true blessing wait on you:

"Seek a fit place and there remain,
And strive self-knowledge to attain:

"If in past lives you've stored up merit
The fruits thereof you'll now inherit:

"Let wisdom skill and discipline
And gracious kindly words be thine:

"Tend parents, cherish wife and child,
Pursue a blameless life and mild.

"Live thou devout, give ample alms,
Protect thy kin from life's alarms;

"Do good, shun ill and ever shrink
From snare of spirituous drink:

"So do thou persevere in good.
This is the true Beatitude:

"Be humble, with thy lot content,
Grateful and ever reverent.

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[1] I have here used the Burmese term, *Nat* instead of *deva*. Fausböll translates "deity" in S.B.E., Vol. X (Sutta Nipāta) p. 42.

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"Study the law of righteousness,
This is the path that leads to Bliss.

"Patience, kind speech, as chance affords,
With holy men, religious words:

"The noble truths, austerity,
Nirvana here, and chastity.
This is true happiness.

"To live from all attachment free,
From sorrow and impurity,
This is the true security,
This is the Highest Bliss."

"The Mingala-thoht," says Sir George Scott, "is one of the first books the young scholar gets into his hands after he has learnt the ordinary formulae of worship. There are few Burmans ... who cannot repeat the Pali text from end to end."[2]

"Side by side with the Pali, they learn the Burmese text."[3] A Burmese version quoted by Father Sangermano begins each verse, "O Nat!" e.g., "O Nat! know that to keep far from the company of the ignorant," etc.[4]

The version given above is quoted from the Appendix to *Modern Buddhism in Burma* (Purser and Saunders), pp. 95, 96. The metric form recalls the sing-song repetition of the young *koyins* as they commit the Song to memory.

See also F L Woodward's translation in *Some Sayings of the Buddha*, Oxford University Press, ("The World's Classics") which brings out the refrain to each verse (not given above): "Theirs is the greatest blessing."

Bishop Bigandet added the following footnote to his version: "Within a narrow compass, Buddha has condensed an abridgment of almost all moral virtues."[5]

III

SONG OF EIGHT VICTORIES

Stories and songs in honour of the Buddha also form part of Monastic education for the laity, especially this medieval poem, probably composed in Siam. Scenes from the poem are depicted on pagoda platforms.

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[2] *The Burman*, Vol. II, p. 318.

[3] M.B.B., p. 12.

[4] *The Burmese Empire*, chap. xiv, p. 130.

[5] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 122.

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The first stanza refers to the legend of Māra, King of Death and Lord of Hell, who is said to have opposed Gautama's passage to Nibbāna.

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"By liberality did he
The Sage attain to victory,
Such was his chosen armoury!
Māra, by all his host attended,
With thousand flashing swords defended,
On his war-elephant so proudly seated,
In panoply of steel the Sage defeated.
  Be yours his glorious victory
  And yours its ample blessing be!"

The second stanza celebrates an encounter with a demon who used to devour children:

"By patience and tranquility
(Such was his chosen panoply)
The Sage achieved the victory.
Alavaka, the demon dread,
The livelong night he combated,
With heart of brass redoubtable,
Fiercer than Māra, lord of hell.
  Be yours his glorious victory
  And yours its ample blessing be."

The third stanza refers to the last of the murderous attempts of Devadutta, the cousin and would-be supplanter of the Buddha. It is told that the Buddha's compassion had such an effect on the elephant Nalagiri that the brute fell before him and removed the dust from the Buddha's feet.

"By the waters of his pity
He won the glorious victory
O'er Elephant Nalagiri!
As the dreadful thunder crashing,
As the lurid lightning flashing,
As the jungle-fire encroaching,
He beheld the brute approaching.
  Be yours his glorious victory
  And yours its ample blessing be!"

The fourth stanza relates an encounter with a robber; the fifth concerns a victory over slander as to Gautama's chastity; the sixth recounts his triumph over a false teacher; and the seventh points a moral by describing the victory attained by Moggallāna, one of Gautama's chief followers:

"His pupil too by magic might
Did aid him in the heroic fight...."

The eighth stanza refers to the Arahat's power to assume other forms and pass through the air unseen.

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871 The poem therefore emphasises three lessons:

779 1. The honor due to the Buddha.

539 2. The blessing brought by the Buddha.

3. A challenge to the pupil to follow the Buddha's moral example.

The stanzas here quoted are from the version given by Purser and Saunders, M.B.B., pp. 99 ff.

V.

THE NEMI ZAT

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Zat is the Burmese for Jātaka (Buddhist Birth Story). Of these the Nemi, Temi, Zeneka and Wethandaya Zats are especially popular, and form part of the Burmese child's education.

Reference has already been made in the text to the Wethanday Zat (Story of Prince Wessantara) which commends a prince who was willing to give away a kingdom, chariot, children and even his wife in his zeal for his own salvation.

The following is an extract from the Burmese version of the Nemi Zat given by Bishop Bigandet. As will be seen, it sets out the pains of hell and the blessings of heaven. The Burmese are not the only people who have considered such stories suitable to encourage young children in the right path!

The Buddha explains how he was, in a former existence, the ruler of the country of Mitila. As such, from a tender age he "displayed the most liberal and pious dispositions in making abundant alms and fervently observing all the religious practices. All the inhabitants of that kingdom followed his example.... During those happy times, hell seemed to have become quite unnecessary...

"On a certain day Nemi appeared to be most anxious to know which was the most excellent practice, the bestowing of alms, or the observance of the precepts." The King of the *Nat* realm himself came down from his glorious seat to give the answer, and, on his return, he eulogised King Nemi so strongly that the other *Nats* wished to see this virtuous prince. Accordingly a young *Nat*, named Matali, was commanded to escort the king to the *Nat* realm.

Stepping into the carriage sent for him, the king "abandoned himself to the guidance of his heavenly guide."

"Two roads are now opened before us," said Matali, "the one through the dismal dungeons, where the wicked are consigned to undergo punishment for their offences, and the other through the blissful seats, where the good are enjoying the rewards allotted to them for their virtues. Which of the two do you wish to follow?"

The prince said he wished to visit both places.

Matali answered in a mild tone of voice that his request should be complied with.

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The celestial guide directed his rapid course through the regions of desolation, where dwells an eternal horror. The first object they met with was a broad and deep river... glowing like a flame.... On the banks of that river stand the infernal ministers.... wounding, piercing the unfortunate wretches who try to get out of that horrible and burning water.....

"What are the crimes," asked the terrified prince, "that have committed the unfortunate inhabitants of this place to undergo such unheard-of sufferings?"

"They are," replied Matali, "the persecutors of the weak, the heartless oppressors of the poor etc."

At another hell, Matali explains, "These suffer for having done no good to their fellow-creatures, for preventing others to do some, and for having borne envy to their neighbours."

After visiting other hells and receiving similar explanations, "Nemi was suddenly brought over to the beautiful, smiling and blissful seats of the blessed. He soon descried the celebrated palace made of diamonds.... In that palace Biranee occupied a splendid apartment; she was then lying on a soft sofa, surrounded by more than a thousand beauties.

"What good works," asked Nemi, "has Biranee practised to deserve such a magnificent reward?"

Matali replied, "This daughter of *Nats* was formerly a slave in the house of a pounha. She was always very attentive to all the duties of her position, and at the same time regularly observed the precepts of the law. On a certain day her mistress, who was wont to feed eight Rahans (monks) daily, fell into a fit of anger, and said that she was unable to bear any longer the fatigue attending the maintenance of these religious. But the young slave, full of religious zeal, took upon herself the labour of feeding the Rahans. For this good and meritorious work she is enjoying the happiness of her present position."

After visiting other heavens and receiving other similar explanations, Nemi was introduced to the presence of the chief of the *Nats*.

On his return to his kigdom he told his people what he had seen "and concluded by exhorting his people to be liberal in bestowing alms, that they might hereafter be admitted to share in the enjoyment of the Nats' happiness.

---from Bishop Bigandet, *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 153ff.

(From the context it seems clear that the Bishop had not himself seen any copy of the Jatakas. He says that he has heard that there is such a book in Ceylon and makes a conjecture about its contents.)

NOTE C.

AN-ATTĀ DOCTRINE, NIBBĀNA AND INDIVIDUAL SURVIVAL

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The Buddhist denial of the soul or ego seems to the average non-Buddhist inconsistent with the belief in individual survival after death which belief in Nibbāna seems to imply. But intelligent Buddhists are equally bewilder-